

THE MOUNTAIN AREAS OF SCOTLAND



CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT



A report by the COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND



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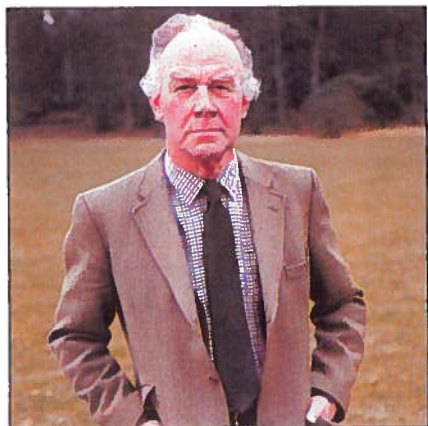
COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND

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CHAIRMAN'S PREFACE



J. Roger Carr,
*Chairman,
Countryside Commission for Scotland*

The beauty of Scotland's countryside is one of our greatest assets. It is the Commission's duty to promote its conservation, but this can only be achieved with the co-operation, commitment and effort of all those who use and manage the land for many different purposes.

The Commission has been involved with few environmental and social issues which generated so much discussion as the question of securing the protection of Scotland's mountain heritage for the benefit, use and enjoyment of present and future generations. We therefore responded with alacrity to Government's encouragement to look at this question afresh, and this report is the outcome of a review conducted over the past year, during which wide consultation was carried out. This is, however, the Commission's report and we accept full responsibility for its content and conclusions.

Acknowledgement is made elsewhere in this report to the efforts of all those who have contributed over the past year to the completion of this work, not least the members of the review advisory panel and Commission members and staff. I would, nevertheless, like to record my special gratitude to the Commission's Vice-Chairman, Mr John Arnott, who has guided this complex exercise from the outset.

The report has been written at a time when amalgamation of the functions of the Countryside Commission for Scotland and Nature Conservancy Council (Scotland) is being proposed. Assumptions in the report about the role of the resulting Scottish Natural Heritage Agency may require some adjustment if merger of the two organisations does not come about.

I trust that the report will be of interest to all those who share our concern for a sustainable future for Scotland's countryside and people.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Carr', with a horizontal line underneath.

J. Roger Carr.
*Chairman,
Countryside Commission for Scotland.*

INTRODUCTION

The Review: Its Origins and Scope

1.1 The Countryside Commission for Scotland was invited by the Scottish Minister for Home Affairs and the Environment, Lord James Douglas Hamilton, to **"study management arrangements for popular mountain areas such as the Cairngorms, taking into consideration the case for arrangements on national park lines in Scotland."**

1.2 The Commission welcomed this invitation because it believes that there is a need to give new impetus to the care of Scotland's mountains and also to review the role that these areas are to play for a rapidly changing society. This report presents the Commission's advice to Government on the future stewardship of the nation's mountain lands.

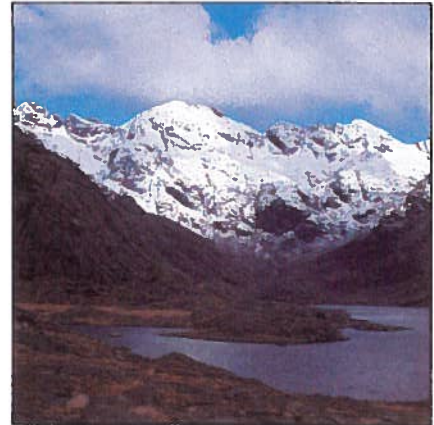
1.3 Mountain areas may be popular because they are much visited, or popular in the sense of being highly valued for the quality of their scenery, wildlife or other attributes. The Commission takes the view - shared by many consultees to the review - that conservation of the quality of our mountain environment is of paramount importance in order to safeguard its use and enjoyment. There is a long record of efforts to conserve Scotland's natural heritage and to provide for its enjoyment, which is summarised overleaf. [p.6].

1.4 Many consultees urged that the problems of Scotland's mountain areas occur over the whole of the uplands, and hence the review should not take a narrow geographic remit. Some parts of our mountains are more visited, some have greater natural beauty, others are wilder and more remote, but in most people's perceptions it is the whole assembly of rugged and remote land, the broad vistas and superb mix of land and water that attract.

1.5 An exact boundary cannot be put around the area of this review, but its geography can be taken to accord with land of the lowest agricultural potential (*map 3*, p 10.), which has some coincidence with the distribution of Munros and Corbetts (hills over 3,000 and 2,500 feet respectively) shown in *map 2*, p 8. A generalised sketch of the areas that are both popularly valued and visited is shown on *map 1*, but at this small scale many local areas of attractive hill country are omitted.

1.6 Inevitably, from this geography, the review looks mainly north and west, where the prime areas of Scotland's mountains are to be found. But our main towns and cities all lie close to uplands which are much visited, and the Southern Uplands face some of the same problems and pressures as the northern hills. Some of the recommendations of this review are relevant also to these areas, which contribute to the diversity of Scottish hill country and are for many Scots the valued hills of home.

1.7 The Commission is charged with responsibilities for the conservation of natural beauty and for the enjoyment of the countryside.

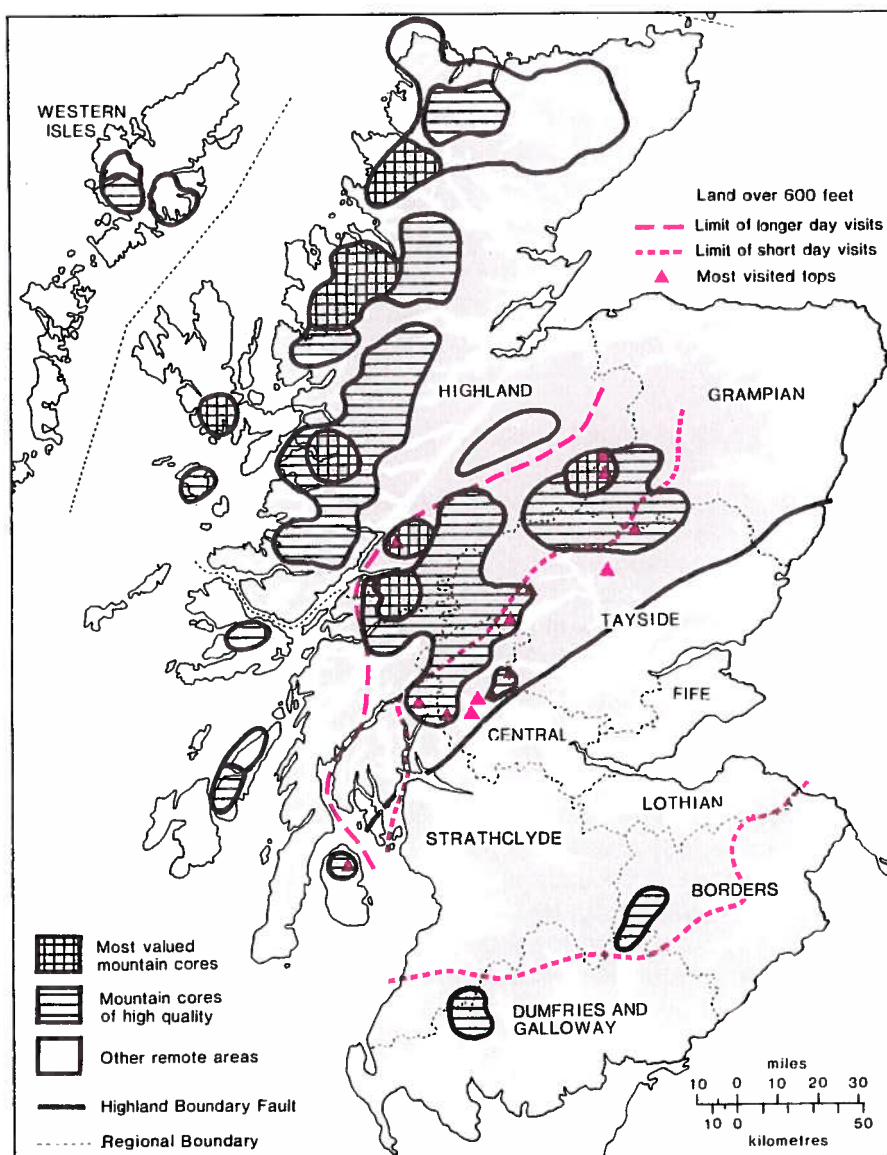


Conservation of the quality of our mountain environment is of prime importance.

Both these functions link intimately with all rural land use practice and policy, and hence the review ranges widely in its scope as well as in geography.

1.8 Lastly, the Commission has approached this review with a commitment to sustainable management of our rural resources, aiming to secure use of our land and water for today's society in a way that will ensure that these same resources are handed undiminished to our successors. This philosophy (explained in Annex 1) is fundamental to our recommendations.

Map 1. THE MOUNTAIN AREAS OF SCOTLAND



Recreation and Landscape Conservation: Key Events

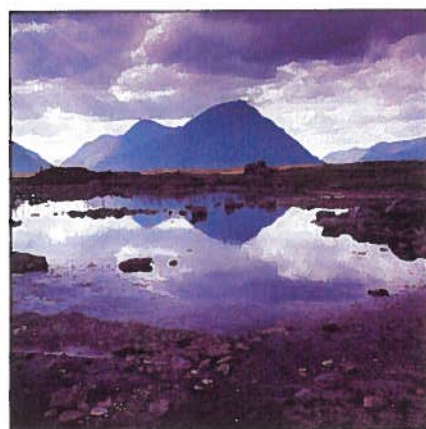
- 1884 James Bryce, Aberdeen MP, promoted a first attempt to secure legislation for access to the mountains.
- 1929-1931 The Addison Committee, set up by Government, examined the case for national parks, and concluded that, with the exception of the Cairngorms, parks on a North American model were not feasible in Britain. It confirmed the need for new measures to protect the countryside and promoted two kinds of park, to make better provision for recreation near where people live, and to protect scenery and wildlife. These proposals were not implemented, but debate about the need for protection of the countryside continued through the 1930s.
- 1935 The National Trust for Scotland established. NTS acquired Glen Coe and Dalness in 1936, the first of its chain of mountain properties.
- 1942-1947 Post-war reconstruction debate in England and Wales led to the report by John Dower (1945) which recommended a series of national parks (and other provisions for countryside protection and recreation). A further review by the Hobhouse Committee (1947) presented revised proposals, and also reported on the conservation of nature.
- 1944-1947 Post-war reconstruction review of the same subject in Scotland was through two committees chaired by Sir Douglas Ramsay. The Scottish National Parks Survey Committee (1945) identified five prime candidates for national park status. The second committee examined ways of establishing national parks and conserving nature. It favoured land acquisition and stressed the role of national parks in revitalising the Highland economy. A wildlife conservation sub-committee proposed a chain of nature reserves.
- 1947 Comprehensive Town and Country Planning legislation enacted.
- 1949 The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act made various provisions for countryside recreation and for national parks in England and Wales. The only part of this Act to apply to Scotland was on nature conservation, including powers to a new Nature Conservancy (later NCC) with a Great Britain remit.
- 1951 Proposals for national parks in Scotland set aside and the five Ramsay areas of Loch Lomond/Trossachs, Ben Nevis/Glen Coe/Black Mount, Glen Affric/Glen Cannich/Strath Farrar, the Cairngorms and Torridon/ Loch Maree/ Loch Broom were designated as National Park Direction Areas, a safeguarding arrangement giving the Secretary of State oversight over planning decisions in these areas.
- 1965 Scottish Study Group No. 9 of the Countryside in the 1970s Conference focused attention on the need for more investment and powers for the protection and enjoyment of the Scottish countryside. Establishment of a Countryside Commission recommended.
- 1967 Countryside (Scotland) Act established the Countryside Commission for Scotland and gave it powers for the enjoyment of the countryside and for the conservation of its natural beauty and amenity. The Act also gave local authorities a wide range of powers for recreation provision in the countryside.
- 1974 CCS published its Park System for Scotland policies which recommended a dual system of a series of recreation parks and improved arrangements for the conservation of fine countryside. The report recommended the introduction of special parks, since the use of the term national park was seen as incompatible with the IUCN classification. Special parks were places that satisfied a national demand for recreational opportunities yet were situated in countryside of such quality as would single them out as national assets requiring care and protection.
- 1980 World Conservation Strategy promoted sustainable development and the adoption of a conservation ethic in all activities.
- 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act consolidated and extended powers for nature conservation.
- 1981 Amendments to the Countryside (Scotland) Act, enabled the creation of regional parks, but proposals for special parks were set aside.

THE VALUE OF OUR MOUNTAIN LANDS

Scenery



Most visitors enjoy our mountains without moving far from the roadside.



For visitors and residents the traditional images of loch, glen, and mountain are valued.

2.1 Affection for the natural beauty of Scotland runs deep in Scottish pride and has long been recorded in song and literature. This appreciation became more widespread with the fashion for romantic landscape, a 19th century concept that still is the basis of many visitors' enjoyment of the Highlands.

2.2 Scenery is the essential resource in attracting tourists to upland Scotland, the majority of whom enjoy our mountains without moving far from the roadside. For visitors and residents the traditional images of loch, glen and mountain are valued, as are the qualities of wildness, drama and colour in our mountain landscapes. The inland lochs - the large and popular or the many small hill lochans - add greatly to beauty and wildlife value. On the western seaboard, mountain and sea lochs, and islands of great visual character, all combine to create outstanding seascapes.

2.3 Scotland's landscapes also have international renown. While there are many places in the world that have grander scenery, the great variety of upland Scotland, the rough and open landscape, the soft colours and varied texture of the moorlands, the northern light, the changeable weather and diverse wildlife all combine to create an austere beauty, praised by commentators with international experience.

Natural History

2.4 Upland Scotland is of importance for upland birds, for moorland and high mountain vegetation, for wetland and blanket bog, and there is much of scientific and popular interest in the geology and geomorphology. The coastlands of upland Scotland are also important internationally for their wintering wildfowl and waders, and for sea-bird colonies.

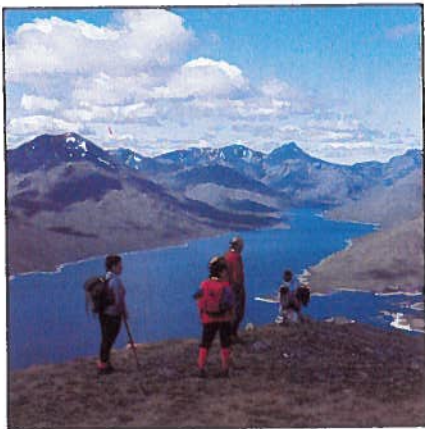
2.5 Although there have been major losses of fauna and of natural woodland cover in historic times, the special value of upland Scotland for nature conservation is the extent of relatively unmodified habitats. This provides the large areas required by some moorland and mountain birds, and range for red deer, Britain's largest wild mammal. Central to this wildlife value is the location of upland Scotland, enjoying a maritime climate at relatively high latitudes, and holding some elements of arctic fauna and flora that link our high montane habitats with northern Europe.

2.6 Important in the native fauna are the species that are managed for game shooting and fishing. Grouse, roe deer and other species are shot on lower ground, but in mountain areas red deer is the main quarry and central to land use issues. Increasingly, Scotland's fine game resources are in demand by visiting sportsmen.

Outdoor Recreation

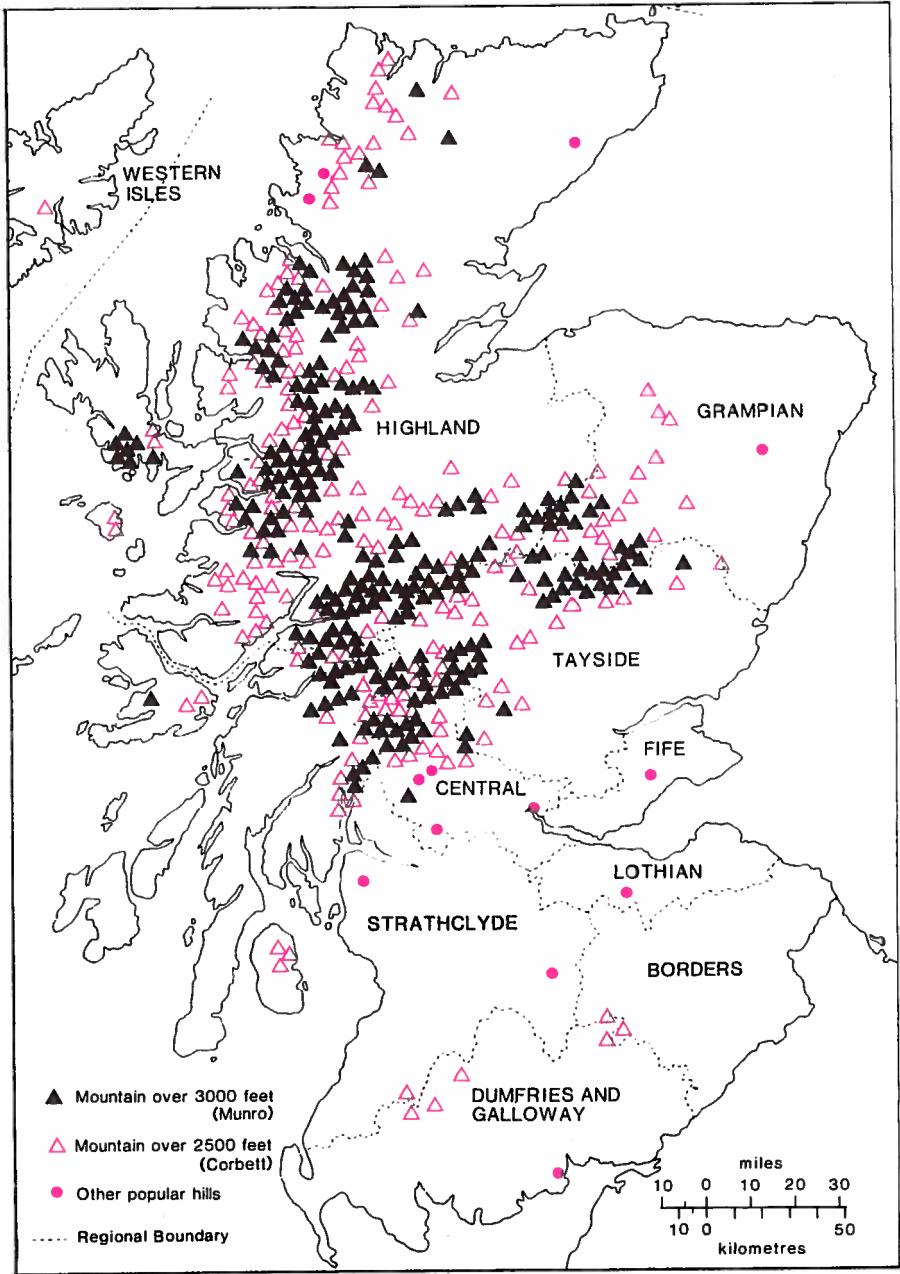
2.7 We have long valued our mountains as a place for outdoor recreation. The Scottish Mountaineering Club has just celebrated its 100th anniversary, and 1991 will be the centenary of the first publication of Munro's tables, the listing of mountains over 3,000 feet, which today provides a stimulus for many hillwalkers. The earliest rock climbs in the Cuillin of Skye date as far back as the mid-1860s, and by the late 1890s the great crags of Ben Nevis were being scaled summer and winter. Skis were first used on Scottish hills before 1910 and constructed tourist paths existed on hills like Ben Lomond, Ben Vrackie and Ben Lawers at the turn of the century. Popular use of our hills for recreation is thus around 100 years old.

2.8 Scotland has the most varied, extensive and challenging mountains in Britain. While modest in vertical scale, as compared with alpine ranges, their wildness and often severe weather in winter can require mountain-craft skills of a high order. Steep rock, ice and snow all attract many climbers and a measure of this resource is that it has



Munro's Tables provide the stimulus for many hill walks.

Map 2. MUNROS, CORBETTS AND OTHER POPULAR HILLS



nurtured climbers of the highest international skills. The Highlands also hold Britain's main snow resource and our five main developed ski areas.



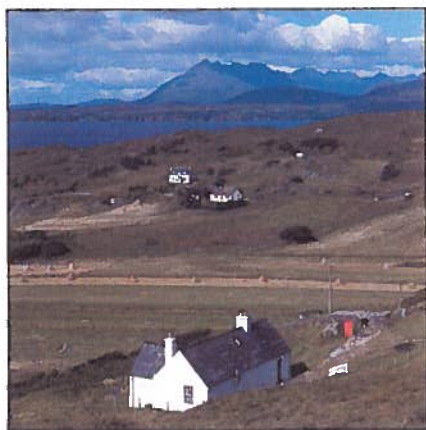
The range of mountain - based recreation has widened.

2.9 The range of mountain-based recreation has widened to include new or expanding pursuits such as hang-gliding, cross-country skiing and mountain-biking, and there is also a trend towards pursuits involving challenge and hazard like para-gliding. Increasingly, the mountains are used by organised groups for military and adventure training, and for the study of the natural environment.

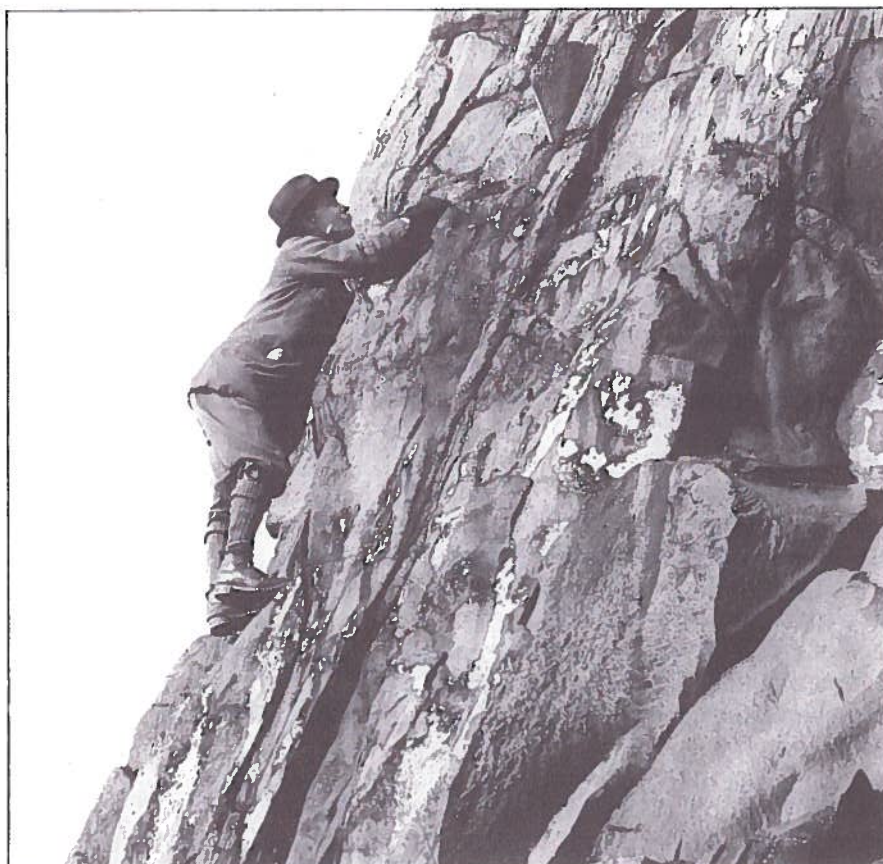
2.10 The rugged and natural qualities of much of this terrain combine with remoteness to give a special sense of challenge - often hazard - in the penetration of our mountains. These landscapes are almost all man-modified and have human uses attached to them, hence there is no true wilderness, but they have special qualities of wildness and solitude that are increasingly important to a nation of mainly urban dwellers, whether seeking active recreation or enjoying mountain scenery from the road.

Cultural History

2.11 Many people value the cultural and human links with our mountains. The archaeology of upland Scotland records a long history of man's inter-action with a harsh environment. From prehistoric cairns, farmsteads and hillforts through to deserted settlements and shielings of the 19th century, there is a fascinating record of people living in and exploiting the countryside from coast to hill tops. These monuments provide a tangible link with the past history of upland Scotland, as do its language, place names and the associated literary and social history. Appreciation of our mountains is enhanced by an understanding of the connections between a landscape of great beauty, its historic past, and present-day life and culture in these areas.



Many people value the cultural and human links with our mountains, and they have long been valued as a place for outdoor recreation.



LAND USE AND CHANGE

Background

3.1 Land use in Highland Scotland has a complex background, part of which begins with the Jacobite Rising of 1745 and the overthrow of the old social order in parts of the Highlands. New patterns of land-holding, the spread of sheep farming, the Clearances, emigration and the emergence of the Victorian sporting estate all generated deep emotion and some civil disturbance. Government intervention eventually led to some re-distribution of land but by the time this took place, the large sporting estates had become the dominant form of land tenure. A close attachment to the land and a sense of injury about land tenure continue in the Highlands to this day.

3.2 The hard metamorphic and igneous rocks of upland Scotland create land-forms of character but contribute little to soil fertility. Soils over much of upland Scotland are impoverished, with better soils mainly confined to alluvial areas in the straths, to dune pastures on the coasts, and to small areas of softer volcanic rocks, particularly on Mull and Skye. On higher land, soils are thin, the growing season short, and vegetation damaged by human use is slow to recover. Even on lower ground in the mountains, peaty soils and their vegetation are easily damaged by concentrations of use.

3.3 Poor soils, rough terrain and climate all combine to limit the productive potential of this land, as shown by maps of land capability, prepared by the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute. These constraints are central to broad issues of land use allocation, and also to local land management.

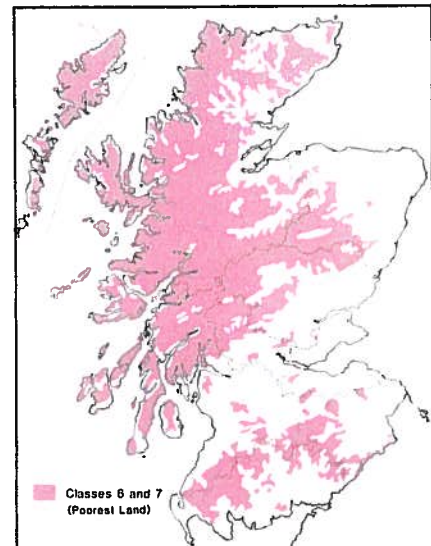
Agriculture

3.4 Pastoral agriculture has long been important to the upland economy, with hill sheep now the dominant grazing animal, there being about 2.5 million sheep in the area of the Highlands & Islands Development Board (soon to be Highlands and Islands Enterprise) and with cattle less common than in the past. Almost all the land here is rough grazing.

3.5 Hill farming has never patterned the landscape in Scotland in quite the detailed way that it has in parts of the uplands of England and Wales but, in some straths and glens, it plays an important role in creating a well-managed appearance to upland countryside. Extensive grazing by sheep (and also by red deer) has been blamed for the lack of recovery of previously lost natural woodland and reduction of the botanical variety of hill pastures. Muirburn - often ill-managed - has been a factor in damaging hill grazings and in suppressing woodland regeneration.

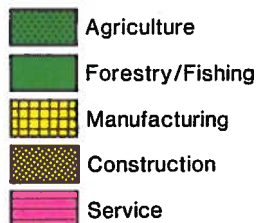
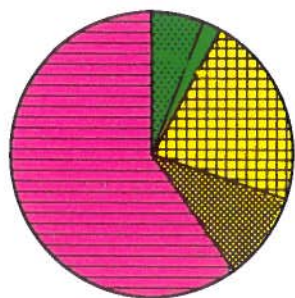
3.6 Little of this agriculture could survive without subsidy. These subsidies are essentially social in their aim and mainly compensate for

Map 3. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION



[Macaulay Land Use Research Institute]

Scottish LFA Workforce



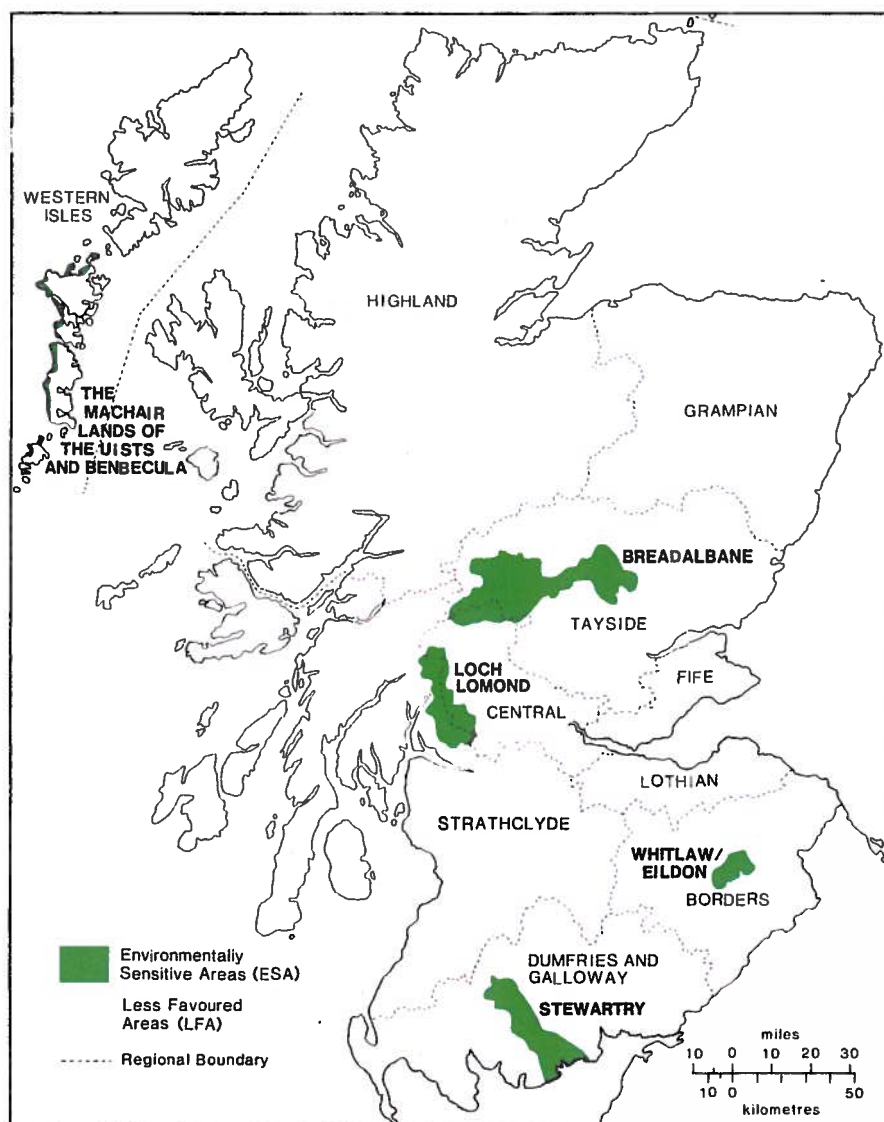
1981

the physical disadvantages of farming in our uplands. For most of these farms, subsidy is more than 50% of farm income. Support to upland farming is now influenced by European Community (EC) policy, and all the Scottish uplands are designated as a Less Favoured Area (LFA).

3.7 Overall, in the Scottish LFA, agricultural employment stands at 6% of the workforce, a measure of the less important role today of agriculture in upland economies. Yet, farming and crofting in the uplands act as a social and cultural anchor to local communities, and give residents a stake in the management of the land.

3.8 There has been a move towards support to farmers that also brings environmental benefits, for example under the Environmentally Sensitive Area programme. This five-year scheme is under review, but there is already considerable support for the principle of funding landscape and wildlife management in this way.

Map 4. ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS AND LESS FAVOURED AREAS



Natural woodland is the climax vegetation for much of the lower ground in our uplands.

Forestry

3.9 Natural woodland is the climax vegetation for much of the lower ground in our uplands. Today, only remnants of the original woodland remain, for example, the extent of native pinewood is no more

than 12,500 ha. Native woodland is now less than 1% of the land cover of Scotland and many of these woods are in poor condition.

3.10 Increase in the area of commercial forestry has been led by the Forestry Commission, using North American west coast conifers that suit our cool moist climate and long growing days in summer. Although the original intention to create a strategic reserve of timber has been set aside, expansion of forestry continues to serve the wood processing industry and to contribute to the rural economy. Forests in Scotland now cover 1.4 million ha or 13% of the land area, but this is still well below the woodland cover of most countries in mainland Europe. The Forestry Commission has been a notable provider of facilities for public recreation and its five Scottish Forest Parks all contribute to enjoyment in our uplands.

3.11 The expansion of forestry has been criticised for the poor appearance of new planting, intensive techniques of management, lack of diversity, the use of incentives that encouraged low yield planting on poor quality land, to the detriment of environmental interests of perceived higher quality, and the neglect of native woodlands. Recently, there have been welcome changes to improve design and environmental management in forests, and for better consultation on new planting. One important change has been agreement that indicative regional strategies for forestry will be prepared by regional planning authorities. This is important, because it is expected that most of the present Government planting target of 33,000ha per annum will be met by continued increase in the area of planting in Scotland. However, this approach is new and there is a need to support regional strategies by a broad national view of how forestry is to develop. If our best mountain and historic landscapes are to be protected, new planting must be steered towards preferred locations.

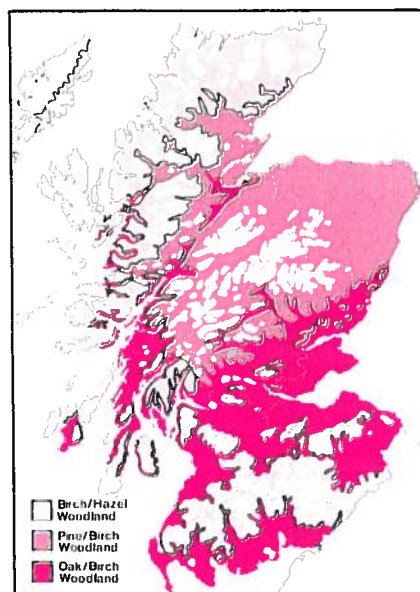
3.12 But more needs to be done: a comprehensive native woodland policy is needed (expanding the welcome new arrangements for native pinewoods) and improvement to the appearance of existing forests should be set in hand at a faster rate. We also need a commitment to better incentives for multi-purpose woodland management and more resources to that end. There is room for more forestry in upland Scotland. The key questions are about where and how such change is to take place.

The Estate as Land Management Unit

3.13 The basis of landholding and management in our mountain lands is the privately owned sporting estate. The economy of each estate is different, ranging from those in the most mountainous areas, run entirely for red deer stalking, to those with land on lower ground having multi-purpose management for game, agriculture and forestry, and with some having tourism enterprises.

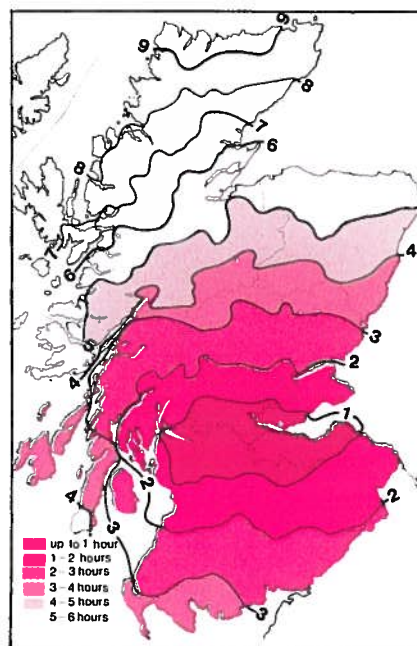
3.14 There has been much-criticised bulldozing of hill roads and some poorly designed tree planting, but estate management in the mountains has led to slow change, and this has served some aspects of the public interest. There has been a generally tolerant approach to public access. But there is a lack of management of woodland on many estates and of red deer, whose numbers are thought to be in excess of 300,000. This is judged by informed observers to be excessive. Continued exhortation by the Red Deer Commission has not led to sufficient culling of deer, particularly in the numbers of hinds.

Map 5. CLIMAX WOODLAND

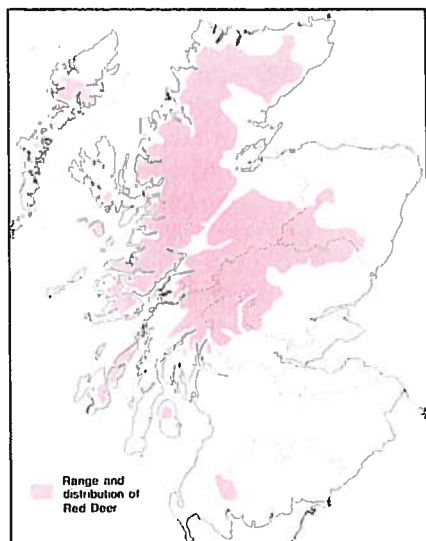


[McVean & Ratcliffe 1962.] This map is indicative only and does not mean that woodland cover was continuous over the areas shown.

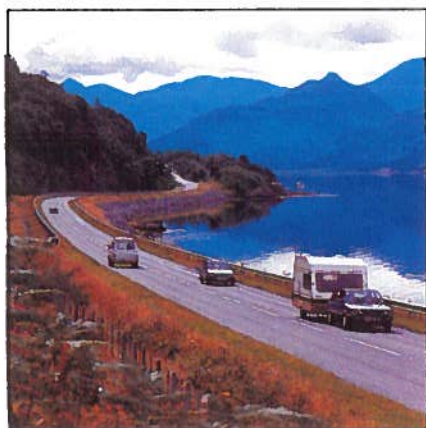
Map 7a. ACCESS BY ROAD 1960
[from Central Scotland]



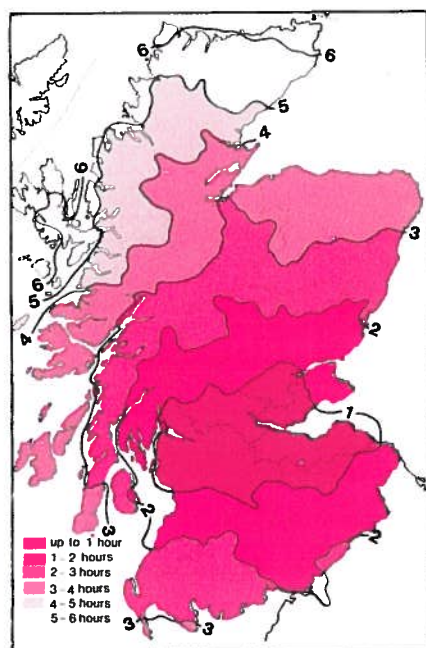
Map 6. RANGE OF RED DEER



[Whitehead 1960.] Red deer are now found outwith this area, particularly in woodlands.

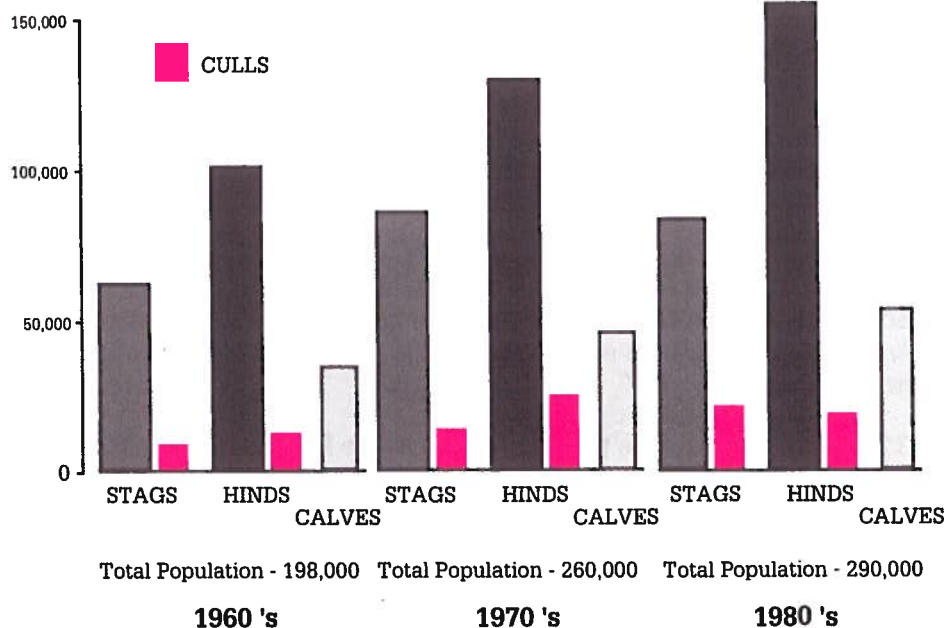


Major road improvements have contributed to greater use of the hills by the public.

Map 7b. ACCESS BY ROAD 1990
[from Central Scotland]

Changes in [Scotland's] Red Deer Population

[from counts by the RED DEER COMMISSION]



3.15 Field sports are important uses of land of low productive capacity. Game shooting in Scotland (of all kinds) is estimated to generate around £31m direct income. However, the management needs and costs of sporting estates run well ahead of their revenue-earning potential and most such estates require private subsidy.

3.16 The trends are towards a more commercial approach, short-term lets and changing owners, some of whom may be less sympathetic to traditional management. With the coming of a more open European Community, with increasing demand for exclusive leisure and more wealthy people in society, we can expect commercial pressures on shooting to increase. Concern has been expressed about the implications for future management of our mountain lands, and for public access.

Tourism and Recreation

3.17 Use of the countryside by Scots and visitors to Scotland has increased in recent years and changed in character. Day trips to the countryside by Scottish residents increased from around 25 million in 1973 to an estimated 39 million in 1989. We know also that there has been a trend over this period away from activities such as touring and sightseeing, to more active or special interest pursuits. In 1973 about 17% of outings involved active pursuits, but this had risen to around 30% in surveys taken in the late 1980s. The value of tourism to the Scottish economy is now estimated at £1.81 billion, and of that almost £400m can be attributed to the Highlands and Islands Enterprise area.

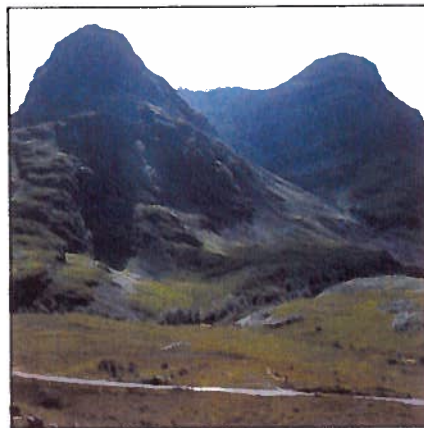
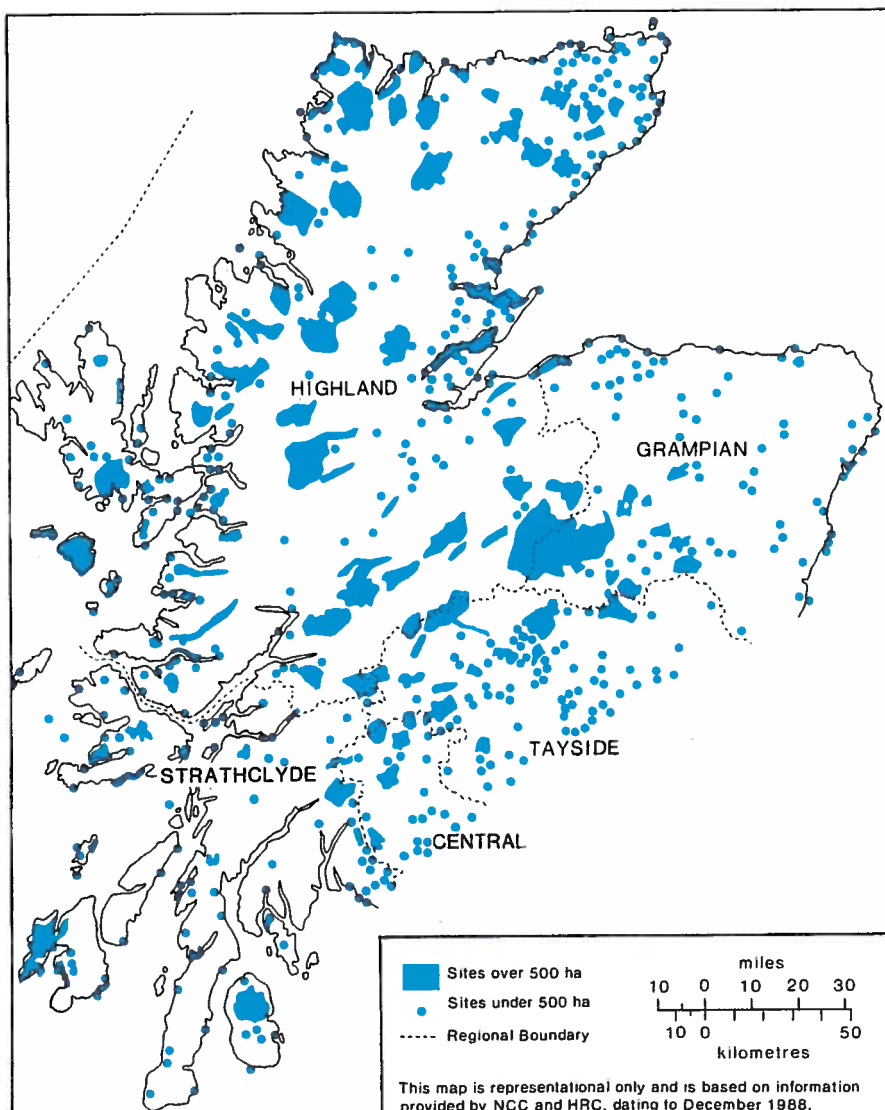
3.18 Major road improvements over the past two decades have also contributed to greater use of the hills by the public, levels of which are now a cause of complaint by land managers. It is probably the case that most estates would be hard-pressed to police their land, should they wish to attempt this, and some users would consider that they had a de facto right of access onto open land, although in strict legal terms most access off rights-of-way is trespass. The tools of mediation between public and private interest on access lie in the Country-

side (Scotland) Act, such as access and management agreements. In practice, these tools have been used very lightly, and to a degree this may be judged a success, in that matters have seldom got to the point where formal mechanisms have been required for the resolution of conflict.

3.19 Many constructed paths on estates, and other paths that have developed as a result of continued public use, are in poor condition. A recent and modest assessment for the Commission of 50 of the most popular upland paths revealed damage that needs over £2m to repair, and up to £200,000 a year to maintain, a burden that owners cannot adopt. The impacts of public access mainly fall on land managers who do not receive the economic benefits that visitors bring to rural areas.

3.20 Recreation by the public is now a prime land use in upland Scotland - dominant in some areas - and it should be recognised as such. Until now it has been the poor relation of the land uses, and there has been inadequate investment for management to maintain the resource to a high quality, particularly in those areas where visitors congregate.

Map 8. SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

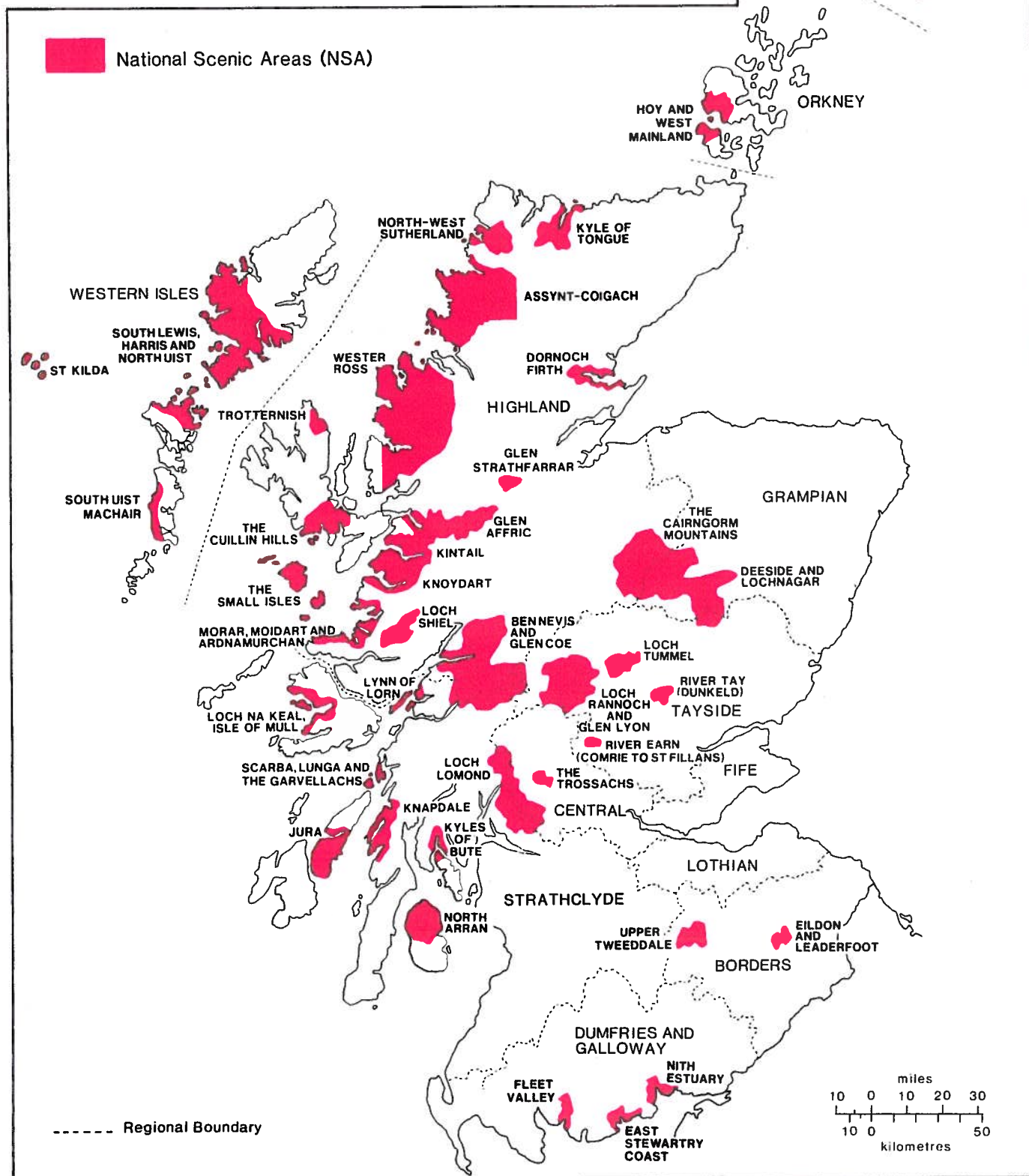


Over the last 50 years the National Trust for Scotland has acquired a chain of outstanding mountain properties.

Conservation as a Land Use

3.21 Conservation has become a significant land use in its own right in the mountains. Over more than 50 years the National Trust for Scotland has acquired a chain of outstanding mountain properties and other voluntary bodies are now purchasing land in the uplands, in particular the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds with its properties in the Cairngorms. The largest areas of uplands managed for nature conservation are National Nature Reserves, owned or leased by the Nature Conservancy Council. About 15% of Highland Region now has SSSI designation and 22% is National Scenic Area.

Map 9. NATIONAL SCENIC AREAS



Other Resources of Mountain Areas

3.22 Prime amongst other resources of our mountain areas is water power, initially developed for aluminium smelting at Loch Ness and in Lochaber, and harnessed in the 1930s in the central Grampians to provide power for the central belt of Scotland. A big expansion in hydro-electric development took place in the late 1940s and '50s, in a remarkable phase of construction works which changed the face of some of our mountain areas, with significant loss to landscape, but also contributing greatly to higher quality of life for the Highland population.

3.23 The programme of development ceased in the 1960s and at present the future role of hydro-electricity is uncertain. Hydro-power currently provides about 13% of the output of the Scottish electricity industry. Legislation now allows small private schemes to link with the national grid, but environmental considerations are now much stronger and there is over-capacity in generation for Scotland's domestic needs. However, in an uncertain future for energy, proposals for new water power development cannot be ruled out.

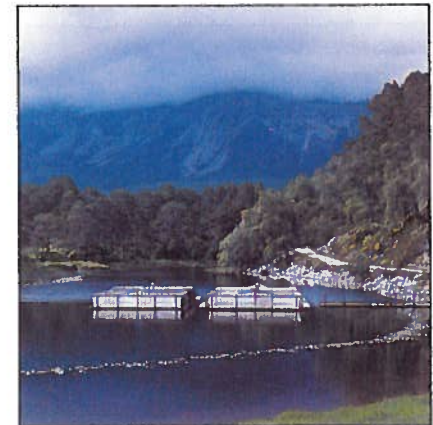
3.24 The drive to make something productive of upland Scotland has left few opportunities unexplored. Peat deposits are periodically reassessed; red deer farming is now a reality, and agricultural researchers are reviewing the potential of other domestic stock able to survive in the Scottish uplands. The past decade has seen a large increase in fish farming, both in sheltered inshore waters and on inland lochs, often in settings that are part of our finest mountain landscapes. There are now around 700 marine and shellfish farms mainly concentrated in sheltered west coast waters.

3.25 The rocks are a resource. Hard rock for aggregate is in demand, and there is a past history of small-scale metalliferous mining, revived recently with an increase in prospecting in the southern Highlands. Here the forces of change lie outwith Scotland, mainly in trends in international prices, which can quickly convert a prospect into a viable operation and equally quickly lead to its abandonment.

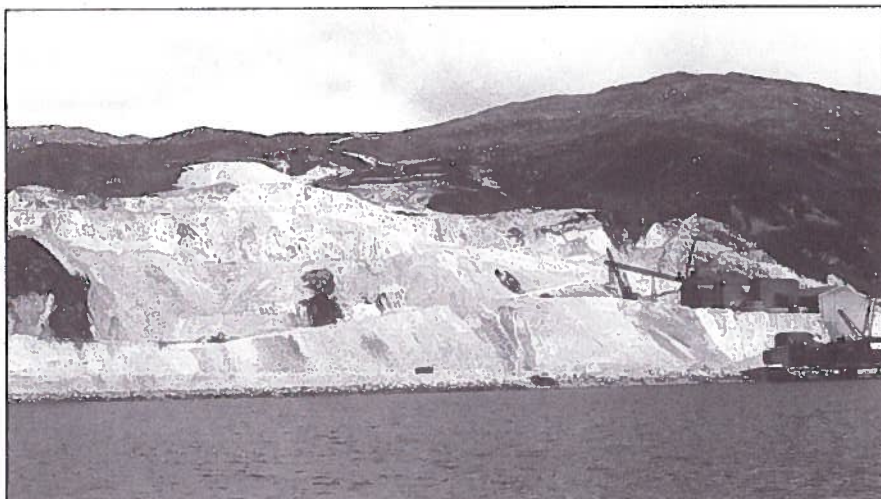
3.26 Deep water inshore, wind and water power, hard rock and minerals, clean air, unpolluted waters, remoteness from large populations, land that is still cheap to purchase and relatively uncommitted in its use are all vital resources of upland Scotland. Far from being land that apparently has little economic value, our mountainous areas have attributes that will always make them attractive for a range of existing or yet unforeseen developments.



Prime amongst other mountain resources is water power.



The past decade has seen a large increase in fish farming.



Hard rock for aggregate is in demand.

National Heritage Designations

National Scenic Areas	Identify Scotland's finest landscapes and require consultation with CCS on certain classes of development. Where a local authority proposes to issue planning consent against the Commission's advice, the Secretary of State is involved.	40 areas covering 12.9% of Scotland or 1.02 million ha. (replaced NPDA in 1980).
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In addition to NSAs, local authorities have promoted in Structure and Local Plans a range of regional and other local measures to identify areas of scenic importance. Several titles are used for these areas, including the older designation of Area of Great Landscape Value.

National Nature Reserves	The premier nature conservation designation, originally enacted in 1949. May be wholly or part-owned by NCC, or leased or managed under a nature reserve agreement. All NNRs are covered also by SSSI designation because of the stronger powers that this designation now has.	68 reserves in Scotland, covering 112,241 ha.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	A chain of sites representative of key habitats or protecting special conservation interests. The designation allows for consultations on development proposals. The Wildlife & Countryside Act of 1981 enables consultation with NCC over management proposals by owners or occupiers that threaten the value of the site, and where NCC objects, a management agreement may come into force, with compensation for restraints placed on management.	1,183 sites in Scotland, covering 766,294 ha.

As well as the two designations above, there exist powers for marine nature reserves and local nature reserves, run by local authorities (7 in Scotland).

There is also a range of international designations, either as accolades recognising high-value sites, or requirements of international conventions or European Community Directives. The main international categories are as follows, with the last two having broader conservation purposes beyond nature conservation alone.

Biosphere Reserves	UNESCO - forming part of a worldwide network of representative sites.	7 sites in Scotland, including Beinn Eighe, Rhum and St Kilda.
Special Protection Area for Birds	EC Directive, implemented through the Wildlife & Countryside Act.	18 sites in Scotland.
Wetlands of International Importance.	Ramsar Convention 1971	19 sites in Scotland.
Council of Europe Diploma	Council of Europe accolade for protected areas of European importance.	Fair Isle and Beinn Eighe in Scotland.
World Heritage Convention Listing	Supreme accolade for heritage conservation - UNESCO.	St Kilda - only Scottish site in natural category.

The Historic Buildings and Monument Directorate of SDD lists buildings of special architectural or historic interest (36,000 listings) and local authorities can also designate conservation areas of architectural or historic interest.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments	Sites identified and overseen by HBM. Sites can include ancient buildings, monuments and other artefacts of man.	4,500 sites in Scotland. 330 being in the direct care of Government.
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WHAT IS GOING WRONG

4.1 Not one response was received by the Commission during this review that said there was no problem to address. As is to be expected, perceptions of the exact nature of the problem and about its severity were widespread. Nonetheless, there was impressive agreement amongst informed opinion that better ways of securing the future of our mountain areas are now needed. From consultees' responses and the Commission's own assessment, the key concerns are less about the facts of change in the uplands than about the scale, location and quality of change.

The quality of decision taking on rural land use change was widely criticised. Many consultees rested their case on past poor design and location of afforestation. Although there have been changes in practice in that industry, these are recent and have not yet worked through to make a perceptible impact on forestry as seen on the hills. Fish farm location also received criticism - *"the unfairness of it occupying every treasured bay and loch"*, according to one consultee - as did bulldozed hill roads, where the present arrangements for control are perceived as being far too little, far too late, and likely to be overtaken by problems arising from increased use of all-terrain vehicles. Underlying this unease about adverse change is a clear view that, for the topics mentioned above, there has been a failure to act early enough to grasp developing problems.

The process of transfer from one rural use to another is perceived by consultees to be not sufficiently open to democratic control. Consultees again instanced the expansion of forestry and fish farming. Although both of these uses now have some consultation with local authorities and other national agencies, the decision-taking process lies outwith local communities, and there is no adequate framework of strategic guidance at a national level, although forestry is now part-way along this road. The need here is for a more open process that allows for mediation between interests.

Still on quality, there is clear concern from consultees that the design and location of new development in upland areas often fails to rise to the standard required for landscapes of the highest importance. Complaint was made about new houses in the countryside, which have poor connection with vernacular tradition; and also about development in, and general tidiness of, settlements in the peripheries of the mountain areas. A single example might be Tyndrum, a key service point for West Highland tourism, where there is functional concentration of development but with discordant and inappropriate design. Small-scale features are often poorly designed and located, for example roadside signs. The public sector wins few plaudits for its development standards, some poor examples being an obtrusive Civil Aviation Authority radar station on Ben Hynish on Tiree, military development in the Western Isles or the Ballachulish Bridge which fails to match its setting, as foreground to classic views eastwards towards Glen Coe and westwards to Ardgour.



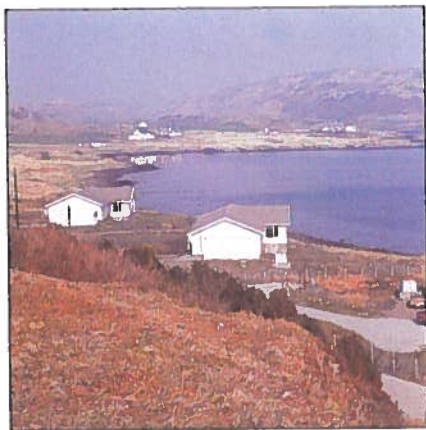
We need to invest in management for outdoor recreation.



Present arrangements for the control of bulldozed hill tracks are perceived by many as being too little, far too late.



The quality of provisions for visitors to Scotland was criticised.



Conflicts are perceived to occur between different land uses.

Public use of the hills is regarded by some land managers as a major constraint on estate management. Conservation is judged by some people to restrict land management. The spread of afforestation and its dominance in some areas is accused of damaging nature conservation interests, for example reduction in territories for upland birds. Numbers of red deer are regarded as damaging to native woodland. Such examples of discordance between land use interests could be extended. The lack of a mechanism for mediation is again a factor.

We may now be demanding too much of our mountains. Land in the core of our mountain areas is of low, often very low, productivity and best suited to low intensity, multi-purpose uses. Trends to intensification and specialisation inevitably lead to discordance with other uses.

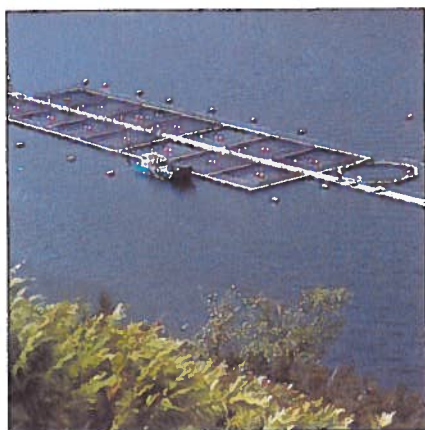
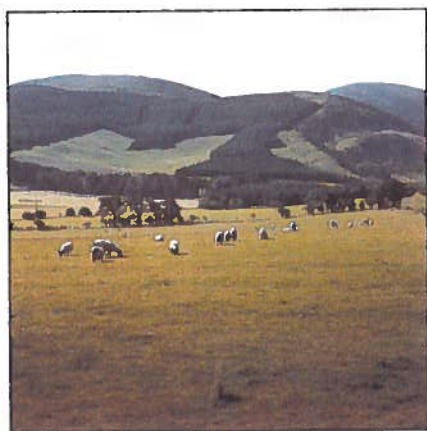
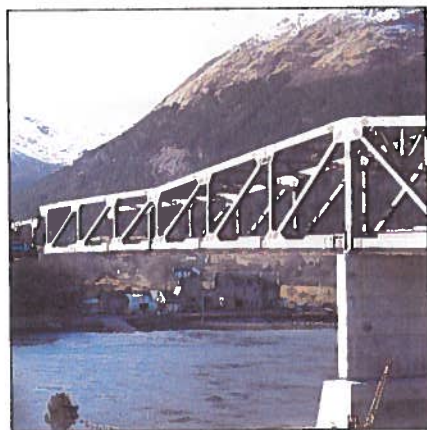
Land managers in the uplands are criticised for not paying sufficient regard to ecological principles and values. Criticism was made of the continued lack of diversity in new forests, and of planting on land of poorest quality. Well-researched experience in upland management is not applied.

The incentive systems for land management in the uplands are regarded as not meeting today's needs. There has been welcome withdrawal from agricultural capital grant schemes that in the past damaged natural habitats and from forestry incentives that encouraged planting on poor-quality land. But satisfactory alternatives are difficult to devise, in large part because these mainly production-based grants are expected to deliver too many objectives, such as social support and wider public benefits such as amenity.

There was widespread discontent amongst consultees that wild and remote land is under threat and lacking effective protection. The area of our remote lands has been reduced over the years by progressively extended and improved public roads and also by private bulldozed tracks. Increased pressures for recreation development and the wider spread of people seeking recreation on the hills also contribute to loss of solitude. The general perception is that our prime remote areas have survived not by design, but simply because no one has yet found a way of making more commercial use of them.

The quality of provision for visitors to Scotland was also criticised. The lack of management of footpaths, which are often wide, obtrusive and gullied by water erosion wherever there is heavy public use; the poor condition of critical locations such as the summits of Ben Nevis or Cairn Gorm; the lack of properly resourced and unobtrusive management for the key areas of Glen Nevis or Glen More and the lack of quality of some tourism provision were all recognised as problems.

There is little strategic vision in the way in which we manage tourism, such as in the provision of information or access to high and fragile land like the Cairngorms. This same lack of customer care pervades the small details, for example, the management of views out from key tourist routes, or the provision of simple, clean and unobtrusive stopping points along these roads. One consultee commented that the visitor is at risk of being seen as just another exploitable resource.



Change to the countryside should be of high standards of design and location.

Over-emphasis on tourism can bring problems for communities in sparsely populated areas. In particular, the demand for second homes can distort the local housing market. Local authority services are put under strain and traditional values and culture can be eroded.

4.2 The list above is not exhaustive: nor is it a catalogue of blame. In many ways, our mountain areas are marginal to most public sector organisations' interests: marginal in the political, the geographic and often the operational sense. Most of the land in the core of the mountains is held privately for exclusive uses, and it generates low revenue, but public use of this land is on the increase, and the public has high expectations for its care.

4.3 The nature of change is not that our mountain areas are in an immediate state of crisis. However, closer analysis reveals that there is much attrition of their qualities. Very few people have deep knowledge of place and change over time for an area as large as our uplands. As individuals, we tend to view any one place from our starting point of acquaintance, and hence may be often ignorant of significant past change. In the early 1960s, W H Murray reviewed change to our mountain areas for the National Trust for Scotland. His review was pungent in its comment and his conclusion has relevance today:

'The ugliness that has grown up in so many of our towns arrived there insidiously, creeping in by degree through lack of overall direction, foresight or control. The same situation is arising in the Scottish Highlands. The outstanding natural beauty of the Highland scene, which is one of the nation's great natural assets, has been haphazardly expended and no account kept.'

Many believe that little has changed since this assessment.

Mechanisms to Influence the Use of Land

4.4 We have a complicated system - too complicated say some - for the control and allocation of land use. This complexity reflects the way in which sectoral policies have operated on rural land over a long period. The routes by which change is influenced are through government departments and their grant schemes and regulatory powers; through advisory agencies (for example CCS and the Red Deer Commission); or local authorities, who operate town and country planning.

4.5 Grants for land management have been too sectoral in their aims in the past, and they have also been too focused on development rather than management. There is increased recognition that these incentives (say for agriculture) have a mainly social purpose and also that wider benefits for society should be achieved (eg for access or conservation).

4.6 The considerable achievements of town and country planning in guiding development to protect the appearance of the countryside are sometimes under-valued. But planning cannot deliver better land management and has difficulties in securing high aesthetic quality in development. The key land uses of agriculture and forestry lie mainly outwith planning. Also, much change in the uplands is promoted through statutory bodies (such as electricity boards), government departments and the local authorities themselves, and some of this activity has its own legislative authority.

4.7 One crucial area for improvement would be to bring local authority planning closer to land management. There are welcome trends whereby planning is increasingly involved in the primary land uses, particularly the arrangements mentioned earlier for indicative forestry strategies.

4.8 There is a range of conservation designations, some of which have few teeth. Some people find them confusing and see them as constraints on local initiative. For this review, the Commission had an independent assessment made of these designations, which concluded that the complexity was overstated. But perceptions of designations as a constraint remain, and more could be done to improve understanding of them and their administration, particularly to link incentives with control in a way that gives encouragement to positive action. This could be a task for the proposed new natural heritage agency.

4.9 An earlier review for the Commission of the effectiveness of the National Scenic Area designation concluded that it needed to be strengthened by measures that would lead to action to protect the features that led to designation in each area. In mountain areas, National Scenic Areas often overlap with designations for nature conservation. The proposed new heritage agency will have the opportunity to consider whether to continue with existing designations or to merge them into a multi-purpose and zoned designation which - for discussion - is called National Heritage Landscape. As with existing designations, National Heritage Landscapes would trigger consultation on proposed changes, but there should also be positive management through incentive. Whichever route is taken, a better awareness of and image for conservation designation is required.

4.10 When conservation and recreation policy was last given a broad review (the Commission's Park System for Scotland paper of 1974) one outcome was the creation of Regional Parks, which provide for recreation management in areas of mixed land use. Four such parks are operational, serving needs close to urban areas. For Loch Lomond, the use of Regional Park was an improvisation, given the lack of a national designation to give status and impetus to the care of its assets. This expediency is already showing signs of strain in that not all of the constituent authorities of the park feel the same degree of commitment. The park has no overall oversight of the complex development pressures occurring in its area, (which do not occur to the same extent in the other Regional Parks); and funding arrangements - already greater than the other parks - are still not sufficient for the scale of visitor pressure on the Loch Lomond area.

The Role of Mountain Areas

4.11 In considering the role that our mountain areas are to play for society, we can expect that the present main uses will continue to be important in the future. These uses might be categorised under four words, namely:

Home : our mountain areas have resident populations whose standard of living should be protected.

Resource : our mountains provide resources of soils, vegetation, animals and water which (until recently) have provided the main base to local economic life.

Enjoyment : visitors and residents gain pleasure and physical wellbeing from the mountains through opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Sanctuary : our mountains have qualities that allow wildlife to thrive relatively undisturbed and give a spiritual refreshment for those who penetrate the remoter areas.

4.12 Discussion on the role that mountain areas are to play for society requires the involvement of many parties, including those who gain their livelihood in these areas, but the Commission considers that the following issues need to be given emphasis:

There is a need to give greater emphasis to Enjoyment and Sanctuary. These are values of high importance to contemporary society. Our mountains are valuable for wildlife and wildness, and for public and private recreation and their stewardship should command greater attention and resources.

We need a new approach that regards the public goods of scenery, wildlife, wild land and clean air as valuable resources. Costs arise for society when these resources are impaired and we can justify anticipatory action and expenditure to guard against adverse change.

The gap between the productive potential of poor land and the income required to maintain today's standards of living is growing. That gap cannot be filled by constantly increasing subsidy to the primary land uses. Yet agriculture will remain important in some upland areas and present support should continue, with more emphasis on social aims. The very difficult task of supporting remote rural economies deserves continued public support.

Involvement in managing land in remote areas is important to local people, in a social and community sense, and also to the wider public interest in maintaining the appearance of this land. The demand for entry to crofting and upland farming is a sign of continued social vigour and a case may exist in some areas for creating more such opportunities, provided it is clear that the purpose is not primarily agricultural but a contribution to strengthening social structures.

Discussion is needed on the future appearance of the landscapes of upland Scotland. Our uplands are very largely bare and for some people this is part of their attraction. Yet on lower ground it is an artificial condition and we have little experience of a more natural landscape. Some clues come from the remnants of the existing native woodlands, and whenever this is present - be it eastern pinewood, western oakwood or northern birch - the vision is encouraging, being one of new texture and diversity, shelter and naturalness. We have all to gain from an approach to upland management that has a component of restoration of native woodland. There should remain large areas of open space, in part because that will be the natural condition of the land, or the outcome of continued uses for shooting and grazing, and also to serve aesthetic need. There is a need for vision about the better design and appearance of extensive afforested landscapes.

4.13 Finally, discussion about land use in the uplands - and the Highlands in particular - is sometimes obscured by attitudes that perhaps need to be challenged if a clearer view of the way forward is to be



Most Scots live in towns and cities, sometimes in poor conditions.



Our mountains are valued for wildness and wildlife.

formed. This applies to strong opinions on land tenure and land use, to expectations of exclusivity and private use of extensive lands, and also to demands to roam freely without restraint. Fortunately, there is some common ground in approaching the future use of our mountain areas through open discussion. This should be encouraged.

Key Issues

4.14 In looking towards solutions there are several key issues that need to be borne in mind, particularly if these solutions are to provide for continued support to the economy of sparsely populated areas and for the use of and care of mountain areas for wider national purposes.

Bringing sectoral policies into harmony: most of the recent changes in the uplands have been caused by public sector policies and funding. Development to support rural communities in the uplands has been pursued with vigour, and most of the land for future afforestation is likely to come from upland Scotland. The Highlands and Islands provide a key selling point for national tourism and land that is relatively empty - a rare commodity in Britain - is attractive for other national purposes, such as defence. The key needs here are for harmonisation of public policies towards mountain lands and commitment to high-quality change in such areas.



Communities in sparsely populated areas wish to maintain their cultural identity.

Involvement by community interests: communities in sparsely populated areas wish to maintain cultural identity, to do so productively, and to have modern standards of living. Given the range of complex external claims on their land, it is little wonder that local communities can be on the defensive against external pressures. We need a more open discussion between local and national interests about setting management objectives in the mountains.

Securing benefits for society: if society at large is to continue to invest - indeed, to expand investment - to support rural land management, then extra benefits for society should follow. In mountain areas these might be for access, scenic and historic landscape, and wildlife protection. So far, we have expected forestry and agriculture to deliver these benefits without special support through incentives. We must be careful that securing public benefits cannot always be a matter of simply providing more funds. Good standards of management and design must be an obligation on developers who seek to make changes to valued landscapes. However, where incentives are involved, their level should recognise the need to build in other public benefits.

Generating stability: land management requires stability to encourage those who invest there to take the long-term view; to give support to those elements of rural management that work on long cycles of operation, such as woodland management; and to retain the skills and commitment of those who work in these sectors.

Influencing private sector management: upland Scotland is unusual compared with some of the main mountain massifs of Europe in that much of the land is held by private owners and managed largely for enjoyment of field sports. The way forward in working more closely with private management interests is by incentive and agreement rather than any detailed controls. There are potential areas of conflict between private management and the public interest, for example in red deer management.

A commitment to quality: our mountains are of superb quality and this requires commitment by all working there to the quality of their management, design and development. There is no easy way forward in securing higher-quality actions by developers and land managers. We have to work at education, the promotion of advice on appropriate standards, the exercise of judicious control over consents in all fields of administration and, in some cases, we must provide special incentives.

Recreation as a key land use in the uplands: a more central place for recreation needs to be secured in upland land use. A new approach is also needed to secure higher-quality recreation management in the more popularly visited areas. Also, closer links are needed with tourism, to ensure that tourism policies are in tune with the need to protect the mountain environment.

4.15 There are, in addition, three more general requirements that should be part of the solutions.

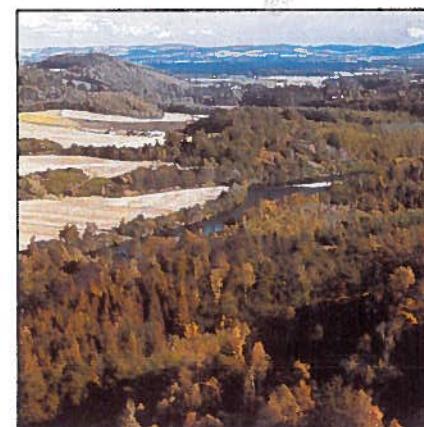
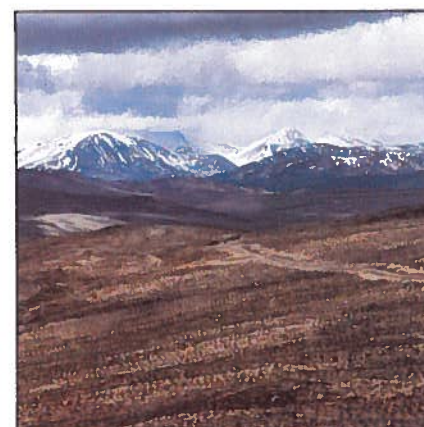
The international context: different national approaches to the protection of areas of highest heritage value are linked through an international system of conservation designations, which is operated by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. The aim is to give guidance to nations to care better for natural heritage of national and international value. The highest accolade is designation of the most important areas as World Heritage Sites. Links with this system are important in drawing from this experience and to give stimulus elsewhere by our own commitment to conserve. [see Annex 2].

Identifying roles for our mountain areas: future policies for our mountain lands cannot easily be prescribed without having a vision of what purpose for society these areas are to serve. This is especially important because of the marginal and fragile character of upland resources and it is no easy task, because no such single vision has existed in the past. This guidance is needed to give political impetus to the purpose of this review.

Pride and commitment: the pride and commitment of the Scottish nation should be harnessed to the protection of our mountain areas. Scotland's history and scenery and their enjoyment are key selling points for tourism and these values are publicised boldly by the development agencies as part of the quality of life of Scotland, in their efforts to attract inward industrial investment. If the scenic and recreational qualities of our land are important in this commercial way, as well as being of high intrinsic value, their care should command the commitment of the whole nation as well as resources which reflect the nation's aspirations for them.

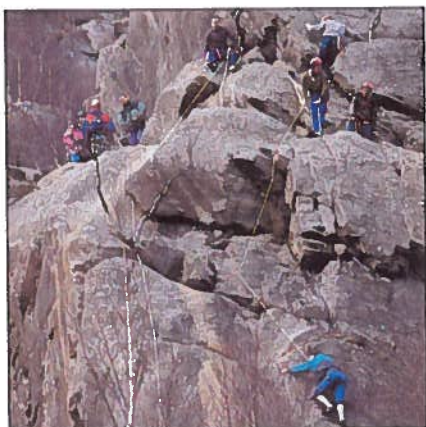


A more central place for recreation needs to be secured in upland land use.



Discussion is needed on the future appearance of upland Scotland.

PUTTING THINGS RIGHT



Participation in outdoor recreation is expected to grow.



Energy generation using water, wind, or wave power may intrude in remote areas.

Looking Forward

5.1 It is difficult to predict what forces may in the future affect our mountains. Some trends likely to lead to change in and increased use of these areas are as follows.

- Projections of growth in visits to Britain from abroad are 4% per annum, with further increase expected on the opening of the Channel Tunnel. More Britons may holiday abroad, although the numbers of holidays taken are increasing and domestic leisure day-trips are predicted to grow.

- Participation in outdoor recreation (including walking) is expected to grow, likewise trends to diversification in recreation and increased participation in pursuits with hazard and challenge. The recent report 'In Search of Adventure' recommends that all young people have an introduction to outdoor activities.

- Increased wealth in Europe, easier travel, and the breaking down of national barriers may intensify present trends for use of Scotland's game resources and for exclusive ownership and leisure in the mountains, not available in most other European mountain ranges.

- Personal travel in Britain will grow. Road traffic is predicted to increase by between 83% and 125% by 2025. Improvements to the A/M74 and the A82 will increase accessibility to our mountains by shortening journey times and increasing the distance of day trips possible from central Scotland - an effect already resulting from the A9 improvements.

- Energy generation using wind, water or wave power may intrude in remote areas.

- Growing concern about pressures on land in the congested areas of Britain may lead to activities such as military training being directed to remoter parts of the country.

- Conversely, increased environmental awareness will also lead to greater value being placed on the less spoiled areas of Britain, and anxiety over environmental issues is not likely to diminish.

The Need for Change

5.2 The Commission rejects the options of continuing as we are, or of simply providing some more money to ease the most obvious problems. **The prime reasons why a new approach is needed are:**

- to move away from sectoral policies for rural land management in the mountains;

- to get away from ad hoc responses to policy and to promote an anticipatory approach to conservation;
- to influence land management activities that are at present outwith land-use controls and incentives;
- to remedy past landscape and wildlife damage;
- to promote the conservation of mountain areas and community development based on sustainable use of natural resources;
- to command some new resources and to re-direct existing funding to policy aims relevant for our times; and
- to put in place a system capable of providing effective management of mountain recreation and access, including regulation if, and where, necessary.

5.3 During this review, the Commission has considered experience from abroad. Valuable as that has been, solutions for Scotland should relate to our own administrative structures, to our own political traditions, and to the special combination of cultural, physical and land-use factors that apply in Scotland. Much can be learned about technical approaches to the management of our heritage areas from experience overseas - such as the value of zoning (see Annex 2) - but administrative solutions cannot be imported from different political contexts. Some of the most relevant experience for Scotland may lie south of the Border, where political institutions are similar even if geographical factors are very different.

5.4 There is a new and powerful climate of public opinion towards action to care better for valued countryside, recognising its importance for recreation and conservation. The facts of past deterioration and the weight of informed opinion on the need for change must be allied to a new sense of vision about caring for our mountain heritage. A new political impetus is needed to devise policies which would enable farmers, crofters and others who manage the land to continue to earn an adequate living whilst taking proper account of the needs of the environment - rather than maximising production of agricultural commodities or other resources - and to find new ways of generating income and new roles in managing the countryside. **Nothing less than a shift in the philosophy of how we care for our mountain areas is required.**

The Uplands: General Proposals

5.5 So far it has been argued that all our mountain lands are of value and that the main problems affecting these areas apply widely over upland Scotland. Solutions of a general nature are required, but there is also urgency to act on the problems of some areas where there are concentrations of pressure and special qualities at risk, and where more focused solutions are needed. Proposals are made for this later in this chapter. The following paragraphs present general proposals for the uplands.

5.6 General solutions in the uplands have to work with existing patterns of ownership, institutions and traditions, but we need to harness these elements into a more effective partnership. Delivering better management in the mountains needs locally-based discussion and action, but it also needs a lead from centre by national bodies.

In particular, a shift to a new approach requires that Government:

- gives direction to its land use departments and agencies that their activities in mountain areas must be integrated, and that their policies should deliver wider public benefit; and
- initiates the preparation of indicative strategies for the preferred locations of, and investment in, key land uses (in addition to forestry) to inform public debate about future land use policy.

5.7 The aim is to give a steer to the different arms of government that they should co-operate with common purpose in the management of mountain areas and give greater status to the management of those land uses that now have a more dominant role in the mountains - recreation and conservation. The preparation of a series of indicative land use strategies would provide a framework for debate and co-operation; a mechanism for involvement at the local level; a guide to give confidence to investors in land management; and a tool to direct public investment effectively and to do this in a more accountable way. This may suggest a national land use plan, but the Commission rejects any detailed plan of this kind as being complex and inflexible. It would take too long to prepare and would be unacceptably authoritarian in approach.

Doing Things Better

5.8 The analysis suggests that there are a number of ways of improving land management.

- **Higher standards of design, location and implementation are needed across all development and management in mountain areas.** The forestry industry is already providing a lead in publishing advice on management practice and there is a need for all advisory and regulatory agencies to review and promulgate good advice of this kind. This is an activity that links with strengthening the duty (see below) to have care for conserving natural beauty and amenity.

- **New arrangements are required for the protection of wild land.** A survey of the extent of this land should be undertaken. A new National Planning Guideline should promote the incorporation of this value into planning and conservation policies. Experience abroad suggests that zoning is an important planning tool for protection of remote areas. The tactics of management will depend on reducing easy access and promoting 'the long walk in', as ways of managing numbers of people using these areas.

- **Incentives for multi-purpose land management should be integrated** and this should build on present ESA experience. This does not necessarily mean a single grant system, but it does need more co-ordination amongst existing schemes run by departments and agencies. The ESA approach of supporting management of land for wider public benefit, while giving support to people living and working in the uplands, should be extended throughout these areas and the range of activities eligible for support widened. This could also link with current EC ideas about promoting a one-door approach to rural development funding - the Carrefour proposals - for which an initiative led by the Scottish Agricultural College is in hand.

- Improved land management grants should:

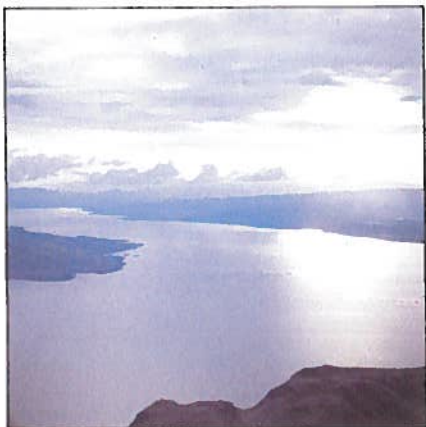
- aim to support continued beneficial management of land (for example, woodlands), as well as promoting development and production;
- encourage a higher quality of management;
- secure public benefits such as conservation, recreation and community support beyond the immediate purpose of grant;
- promote sustainable management and low intensity use of mountain lands where appropriate; and
- encourage multi-purpose management, say, for forestry.

- Activities for which incentives should be available on a wider (or indeed new) basis are:

- landscape and recreation management (with enhanced incentives for local authorities in remote areas, such as grant to management of project staff for agreed programmes of work);
- support to hill farming that helps maintain people on the land while encouraging practice supportive of other aims, perhaps by means of an amended scheme for Hill Livestock Compensatory Allowances;
- protection and management of archaeological sites and historic landscapes;
- improvement of past poor land management, such as remedying poor forest design through plans of operations;
- habitat restoration, in particular, for native woodland regeneration;
- management of red deer, for example, for fencing and increased culling;
- preparation of estate management plans; and
- support to agreed estate management activities through management agreements.

5.9 A shift of resources is needed to ensure that present imbalances between funding for conservation and recreation and that for other land use sectors are redressed.

5.10 In particular, **the funding for the management of recreation and tourism in upland Scotland should be improved.** While there are proposals in succeeding paragraphs for recreation management in the areas of visitor concentration, extra resources are also required for this purpose elsewhere in the uplands. Some of the local authorities in these areas - particularly the district councils - are the lowest-funded authorities in the country, yet they carry a heavy burden in servicing national tourism. Support of this kind could extend to assisting the management of agreed programmes of work and to maintenance, as well as developing stronger countryside ranger services in these areas. The private and voluntary sectors should be involved as partners in this activity and be funded also to implement agreed programmes of recreation provision and management.



Outstanding seascapes are integral to fine mountain areas on the west coast.

5.11 This review has identified a **need to influence the management of the large sporting estates**. The aim is to secure good stewardship of mountain lands. The simplest approach would be to encourage large sporting estates to prepare a management plan (which could be eligible for grant) as the basis of bids for grant payments on agreed activities to implement integrated management objectives. A reserve power (as set out below) to restrain against departure from good stewardship is a modest constraint to set against the potential benefits to estates of incentives, possibly operated through management agreements, for example under the Countryside (Scotland) Act.

Improved Control of Change in the Uplands

5.12 The previous paragraphs advocate better management and improved incentives to that end. There is also a need for some new or strengthened controls.

- Section 66 of the Countryside (Scotland) Act places a duty on departments and public bodies to *"have regard to the desirability of conserving natural beauty and amenity"*. These words are too cautious and they have been too little heeded in the past. A new statutory duty to care for natural beauty and amenity would be more consistent with present public opinion on conservation and is now required.* A stronger injunction itself is not sufficient, and **there should also be an audit of the way in which these bodies discharge this duty**, recorded in their annual reports.

- It is evident from the spread of fish farming and the prospect of other new uses of inshore waters (energy in particular) that **an extension of local authority planning control is required** (without at this stage giving a closer definition of inshore waters). This proposal aims to secure a more democratic assessment of development adjacent to valued coastline, to provide a stronger basis for protection of the inshore marine environment, and to guard against unforeseen and unusual uses of these waters. The purpose is anticipatory, to protect the outstanding seascapes that are integral to fine mountain areas on the west coast. The provision in the Zetland Act for licensing offshore development provides a precedent.

- The Red Deer Commission is unable to intervene in the management of over-stocked deer range. **A power is required to allow culling of the deer stock and the protection of montane vegetation.**

- As stated at 5.11, a **reserve power in the form of a land management order** - to be operated by the planning authorities or by the Secretary of State on advice from national agencies - is desirable to guard against poor stewardship in circumstances not otherwise covered by legislation or administrative control. An appeal procedure as a safeguard for mediation and fair application of such control would be required.

- To improve administrative control on tree planting, the Commission has argued **the need for a planting licence** and it continues to believe that this safeguard is necessary.



A power is required to allow culling of the deer stock and the protection of montane vegetation.

*A stronger duty already applies to the Forestry Commission and the agricultural departments.

- Government bodies generally have limited **powers to require restoration of environmental damage** where change has been carried out without benefit of approval for grant or not in accordance with submitted plans. A remedy needs to be found.

Better Co-ordination

5.13 Some commentators suggest that better co-ordination can be achieved by amalgamation of all public bodies involved in rural land management into a single land use department, but the Commission does not favour this option. The resultant body would be unwieldy and would lack coherent direction in the absence of agreed and integrated policies across production and conservation. Also, it is important that discussion across sectoral boundaries is seen to be open.

5.14 There are a number of past or existing initiatives in rural areas that involve collaborative working through discussion and partnership. These range from the relatively informal arrangements of deer management groups or Skye and Highland Forums, to project initiatives in, say, the countryside around towns or integrated development projects. At the more formal end of the scale are Regional Parks which have a statutory basis, centred on local authorities with membership from and links to other interests. There are then a number of different pathways to collaboration.

5.15 A case has been argued in Chapter 4 for more corporate working, to bring planning and management together, and for more mediation between conflicting land uses. **The Commission believes that new arrangements to meet these needs should be created at the local level and it proposes that a network of land management forums be set up.** These could be run either as a joint committee by the appropriate local authority (supported by a technical group giving advice on land management) or as a less formal committee involving a wide range of members who have agreed to collaborate.

5.16 The functions of a land management forum could include the following: discussion about land use issues for its area, contributions to the preparation of indicative strategies (taking note of national guidance and relationships with adjacent areas), identifying action to tackle special problems on a project or experimental basis, probably through the powers of one or other of the members of the group, and advice on individual owners' management plans. Again, it is essential that the collaborative working by public bodies be given strong direction by Government.

5.17 It would be best, in most cases, for the regional planning authority to service such a group. The skills of planning authorities for this purpose are in mediating between interest groups in a framework that has open consultation. While there is no clear locus for the planning authorities to oversee all the different rural land uses, increasingly they are involved in land use consultations and planning outwith the statutory definition of development, for example, in indicative regional strategies for forestry or Highland Region's framework plans for fish farming. Structure Plans provide for the promotion of strategic advice on land use allocation and allow for public consultation and also oversight by the Secretary of State.

5.18 A working partnership of this kind might involve some adjustment of sovereignty by individual agencies. It is to be expected that agencies and departments would continue to conduct their normal business, advising, administering, and engaging in normal multi-

lateral consultation. But their day-to-day work would be guided by broad policy from national advice or guidelines and by the policies of local/regional strategies. In this way agencies and departments would have a greater element of local accountability.

5.19 The optimum area for a forum need not be specified at this stage, but the consideration of extensive land uses implies areas of some size, although these should not be so large that local identity is lost. While a network of these groups is desirable, in the first instance, priority areas will emerge, most probably because there are special conservation needs to consider, perhaps as National Heritage Landscape areas as suggested at 4.9. In this latter case, it might be appropriate in the first instance for the Commission or the proposed natural heritage agency to take the lead and provide special support and servicing. The choice of administrative mechanism will be determined by local circumstance, with the more complex situations requiring joint committees. Annex 3 sets out possible arrangements for the working of committees or forums.

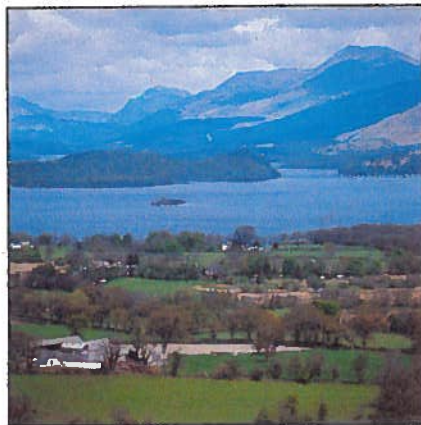
Solutions for Areas of Special Importance



5.20 The proposals above aim to tackle shortcomings in the way we manage hill land, but they do not secure in any conclusive way the future of those areas that are judged to be the very finest of Scotland's mountain heritage and most crucially in need of comprehensive management. It is the Commission's view that there is a need for special arrangements where the resources of landscape, wildness, wildlife and historic and cultural importance (where appropriate) are of supreme quality, and where the numbers of visitors require new approaches to management.

5.21 The case for separate arrangements for these areas of special importance will be met when most of the following characteristics are present:

- a wide range of pressures from development, tourism, recreation and land use conflicts;
- high combined heritage and recreation value of national importance and sensitivity to change;
- a failure so far to act in these areas for the national interest (as evidenced in the Cairngorms and also by the apparent difficulty in corporate working at Loch Lomond);
- a need for action across several local authority boundaries as in the Cairngorms and Loch Lomond, and where voluntary action is unlikely to be effective;
- a requirement for accountable administration of expenditure of new national funding; and
- the need for a special quality of management for both heritage protection and visitor enjoyment.



The Commission considers that the prime areas in need of special protection are the Cairngorms and Loch Lomond.

5.22 **The Commission considers that the prime areas in need of special status are the Cairngorms and Loch Lomond - both being areas of present controversy and urgent need for action, and there is a case also for action in Ben Nevis/Glen Coe/Black Mount.** These three areas are all characterised by their heritage value and recreation

activity: the Cairngorms for their high conservation value; Loch Lomond as a much-loved recreation area of national importance; and Ben Nevis/Glen Coe/Black Mount as the setting for Britain's highest mountain and other outstanding mountain scenery. There is a further area which, although not subject to the same level of visitor pressures, deserves special treatment because of its outstanding scenic and wild-land qualities, and the sensitivity of these characteristics to change. The area is **Wester Ross** (see Annex 7) and there are good grounds for extending this northwards to include Assynt and Coigach as well. Assessments prepared without survey or consultation and intended purely as indicative outlines of these areas are given in Annexes 4-7. Their selection is based on evident management need, and not because they are the four areas of most outstanding mountain heritage, although all are of national importance. For all four the extent of the area described in the annexes is indicative only.

5.23 There are other areas, such as North West Sutherland or the Cuillin of Skye which have good claim for treatment as areas of special importance, but under present circumstances it is considered that their management could be handled within the locally based framework of general proposals for the uplands (see paras 5.13 to 5.19). Cross-border management arrangements also need to be devised for the Cheviot Hills in Scotland, since their counterparts in England lie within the Northumberland National Park.

Loch Maree, Wester Ross.



5.24 The range of powers and mechanisms required for the administration and management of a special area should include:

- the ability to plan for the area in question, both town and country planning and land management planning;
- zoning as a key component of planning for these areas, such as zones for community development, and core sanctuary areas, with appropriate management and buffer zones interposed;
- development control powers;
- powers to enter into and to fund management agreements;
- manpower for land management, including special skills in heritage protection, interpretation and visitor management;
- status to act in co-ordination with other land use agencies and to operate as their agents within the area;
- powers for recreation land management - including byelaws, orders and powers to secure access and control nuisances;
- the ability to acquire and own land;
- powers of last resort through land management orders to maintain good stewardship;
- status and commitment to be able to deliver national objectives in a local context; and
- linkage to local democratic control and community participation.

This last item is of particular importance, because the support and enthusiasm of people who live and work in these areas is vital to the success of any new authority.

5.25 It is important that the new managing authorities can be closely involved in land management. They should be able to act as agent for existing public sector bodies who own or manage land in the area or operate advisory or regulatory powers, such as nature conservation, landscape conservation, recreation management, archaeological care, and forest management. This broad spread of functions is required to ensure that the managing authority can promote and implement a wholly integrated approach to land management. Recognition of an area's national importance for conservation and recreation will require a special level of national funding and national representation on the managing authority. The over-riding purpose of any special area would be to secure the conservation of the area's resources and their sustainable use for the benefit of local communities and society at large.

MAKING THINGS HAPPEN



Options for Special Areas

6.1 The options for management of these areas are of working with existing legislation or of seeking new powers. Options under existing legislation include powers for local authorities to operate joint committees and to prepare subject local plans for special purposes. Such plans have mainly been deployed on recreation topics and the best known examples are those prepared for the Regional Parks - but a subject plan needs a management body to implement it.

6.2 The Regional Park mechanism may be thought then to be useful, as it allows for cross-boundary working and representation of national interest. However, as indicated earlier (para 4.10), the Commission has recognised the difficulties that have occurred at an early stage in the history of the Loch Lomond Regional Park, which is attempting to do a quite different job from the other regional parks in providing for an area of clear national status, across several local authority boundaries, and under considerable recreation and development pressures. The Regional Park designation is primarily for recreation management.

6.3 There are no other existing designations (singly or in combinations) that can be used for these areas. Designations - such as SSSI - are either sectoral or lacking positive management arrangements needed for areas of special importance. The Forestry Commission's Forest Parks overlap with the Loch Lomond and Cairngorm areas and have status and public recognition, but this is a designation with no statutory basis and unlikely to be realised outwith public sector forests. Nor do existing environmental agencies have the full range of powers and remit, either independently or in combination, and they lack any local democratic links.

6.4 The post-war Ramsay Committee favoured national ownership of national parks. In many of the younger countries of the world, where mountain land is managed for conservation or recreation, much of the land is state owned. The Commission accepts that widespread acquisition of land by the state would be controversial and politically unacceptable, but there are options for well-judged and selective acquisitions of mountain properties by the public or voluntary sectors, particularly of areas of key management need. This approach should not be shirked in the right circumstances, particularly where management agreement costs over the years would be more expensive than acquisition.

6.5 In looking for an approach that goes beyond existing powers and structures, the possible options are:

- (i) to establish for each area an independent body with planning powers and membership appointed from local authorities and also for the national interest;
- (ii) to create for each area a local authority joint committee with

Secretary of State appointees for the national interest, and delegated planning powers;

(iii) as a more radical option, to adjust the boundaries of existing local authorities and to create a new authority for each area which could have special functions and duties for the protection of the mountain heritage, this as a key element of their existing range of local responsibilities;

(iv) to provide the proposed Scottish natural heritage agency with powers for the management of special areas directly, but with a procedure (not specified here) to ensure local participation;

(v) to create a new national organisation to manage these areas, probably under the wing of the proposed new natural heritage agency, but having a widely drawn membership including local and community interests in all four areas; and

(vi) to create for each area a land management forum (as recommended earlier as a general solution in upland areas) which is given special direction, political leadership and resources from central government and which would have a remit to promote management appropriate to the area's resources and needs.

6.6 Of these six options, the fifth (a new national managing body) seems least acceptable in that it creates another new organisation lacking local democratic contacts. The first and second (new planning authority or joint committee) have many strengths, in being tested through the administration of National Parks in England and Wales, and they relate well to our existing democratic arrangements. However, this English and Welsh system is itself under review. If this route were to be chosen for Scotland, then it would need modification for Scottish circumstances, in particular, to have a stronger role in co-ordinating rural land management (see paras 5.24 and 5.25).

6.7 The third option, of a local authority with amended boundaries and remit as a managing agency, has simplicity, but falls on political and geographic grounds. The candidate areas are too extended geographically and with few social and political linkages across their core to enable them to act as coherent local authorities. In some cases, the populations involved (Loch Lomond/Trossachs perhaps an exception) would be marginal for viable local authority status and for this reason proposals would be unlikely to be acceptable to the Local Boundaries Commission, far less to the existing local authorities.

6.8 The fourth option, the proposed new natural heritage agency as manager, would be a way of providing the skills for a strong lead to the management of conservation and recreation in these areas. The option is one that might find favour if there were to be no direct oversight of the town and country planning system and the emphasis of the work were to lie with rural land management. However, a lack of involvement in planning would leave a major gap in the protection of these areas. An administration not having oversight by elected members could not handle local planning issues.

6.9 The last option, of four special-status land management forums has some merits. Strictly it would not require legislation but considerable impetus would be needed from central government to bring together parties presently lacking motivation to co-operate. This solution aims to work within existing systems and it could be very acceptable to local land management interests. Major difficulties

would lie with co-ordination of action, the lack of accountability for national inputs of Exchequer funding and also in the lack of status, identity and long-term commitment. An integration of planning with management would be difficult to achieve, as would full commitment by all parties.

6.10 Of the options set out above, the Commission's preference is for an authority that builds on the experience of the Board or Joint Committee model of English and Welsh National Parks. Boards are autonomous bodies making their own decisions independent of their constituent local authorities. They would be readily identifiable by, and accountable to, the public in terms of their responsibility to care for and manage mountain areas. Boards in England employ their own staff and raise funds through precept on constituent counties (and metropolitan districts) up to the level of expenditure authorised by Government on the basis of bids channelled through the Countryside Commission. Their constitution has one-third of their number appointed by the Secretary of State and two-thirds from the local authorities (See Annex 3 for further explanation.) This model requires refinement for Scottish needs, in particular to build in a role for community and land management interests, and to allow for appointed members from these groups.

6.11 The question of name arises. **The Commission opts for the clearly understood term of National Park.** There are differences of opinion about this title, but the Commission recognises the role that National Parks play in most other countries of the world as focal points for commitment and national pride. The term National Park is one that has sound international recognition and provides a clear basis to link the highest level of designation in Scotland with the international conservation network (see Annex 2).

Administration and Funding

6.12 Some further details of possible administration of new National Parks in Scotland is set out in Annex 3. One special issue in upland Scotland is that in sparsely populated areas there are small numbers of elected representatives who might be the local appointees to the park board. Hence, it might be appropriate in some cases for the Secretary of State to appoint members from other community organisations or land management interests. At Cairngorm, Loch Lomond and Ben Nevis/Glen Coe/Black Mount the park area would cross regional and district boundaries and hence the board model of administration would be most appropriate. Wester Ross lies within existing local authority areas and a joint committee status would suffice. This difference is not a measure of different values of these areas: Wester Ross is special, having been judged by the Commission as worthy of recommendation to Government for nomination as land of World Heritage quality. Hence the title National Park is well justified.

6.13 Annex 3 also sets out indicative costs for the management of the four parks. These outline costs are assembled from the costs of administration and operating regulatory functions, estimates of the costs for management undertaken by each park; and from estimates of funding required for the parks to contribute to integral management in their areas. This last figure is very difficult to estimate, but the principle of the park operating as a single land use administration is important, first to simplify public sector administration in its area and, second, to secure an integrated approach in these special areas. The overall prediction of expenditure for the four parks, once they have gone through an initial 5-7 year period of establishment is £7.76m.

6.14 At present, national support to National Parks south of the Border is at a rate of 75%, but in Scotland the Commission believes that there is a case for a higher level of funding, given the very low financial resources of local authorities in remote Scotland, and the high proportion of heritage land in some authorities' areas. The recommended general level of national funding is 85% with possible increase on this figure in Highland Region, owing to its large area of heritage land, and in order to achieve the programmes of essential work outlined in Annexes 4-7.

Timing and Interim Arrangements

6.15 **The Commission considers it important that National Parks be set up as soon as possible.** In order to avoid uncertainty the Commission recommends that interim arrangements be set in hand to safeguard the four areas. This could be done at the request of the Secretary of State. Alternatively, the Commission's existing powers for demonstration projects under Section 5 of the Countryside (Scotland) Act could be a route whereby a shadow park authority could be set up, at least in the Cairngorms, Loch Lomond and Ben Nevis/Glen Coe/Black Mount. Inevitably, not all the desired powers and functions could be implemented under an interim venture of this kind, but with direction from government and goodwill amongst existing organisations, an important start could be made under shadow park boards. A Wester Ross National Park might be more easily brought into existence given its location wholly in Highland Region and the proposed simpler structure of a joint committee, which can be set up within existing legislation.

Monitoring and Review

6.16 A link is needed between the general proposals for action in the uplands and those for National Parks. This arises because there are some areas which have claim for National Park status but the need for this level of protection is not yet self-evident. It is proposed that areas of this kind - say, North West Sutherland or the Cuillin - could be handled under the general arrangements proposed for uplands with joint committee status. There will inevitably be concern about the future of these areas of high conservation value and it would be essential for the proposed new natural heritage agency or the Commission to:

- maintain under review the status of candidate areas for possible transfer in future to National Park designation;
- to ensure through the local co-ordination procedures that their heritage value is recognised and that local project-based initiative is encouraged to ensure anticipatory and safeguarding management; and
- to monitor the effectiveness of the arrangements prescribed and recommend modifications where required.

This process of monitoring and assessment is vital in ensuring that a comprehensive approach is taken to the care of our finest mountain areas.

THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The Recommendations in Summary

7.1 The Commission sees a need for an announcement by Government of the political will to set up National Parks in certain defined areas. If the slow process of attrition identified in this report is to be halted, if an integrated approach to rural land management is to be achieved; if rural land managers are to be given adequate incentives for ecologically aware land management, if recreation and tourism are to be properly managed, if wild land is to be adequately protected and local communities adequately sustained, better arrangements for the planning and management of all our mountain heritage are needed. Our recommendations fall into two groups as follows:

AREAS OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE: The Commission recommends (paras 5.20-5.25) that at present four areas require special management arrangements to protect their high heritage value. These are: the Cairngorms, Loch Lomond, Ben Nevis/Glen Coe/Black Mount and Wester Ross. These areas:

- should be called National Parks;
- should have administrative systems based either on independent planning boards (Cairngorms, Loch Lomond and Ben Nevis/Glen Coe/Black Mount) or joint local authority committees (Wester Ross);
- should have land management functions, in particular to act as agent for existing public bodies already owning and managing land or advising on land management in their area; and
- should have local community interests represented on their boards.

To avoid uncertainty, it is important to secure legislation and to set in hand interim arrangements to make an early start on the establishment of National Parks for Scotland.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UPLAND AREAS: A new commitment by the Secretary of State, government agencies, local authorities, landowners, farmers, local residents and voluntary bodies to operate in an integrated manner in mountain areas is needed. Action to implement this should at least comprise the following measures which with the exception of the last one would apply equally in areas of special importance:

- the preparation by regional authorities of indicative land use strategies for forestry, agriculture, landscape and wildlife conservation, sport, recreation and tourism (paras 5.6, 5.7);

- the promotion by developers, controllers and advisers of higher standards of design, development and management in mountain areas (paras 4.1, 5.8);
- new arrangements for the protection of wild land, particularly through a National Planning Guideline (para 5.8);
- co-operation between government agencies over the integration of land management grants (para 5.8);
- grants should encourage quality of management and development and achieve public benefits beyond the prime purpose of each grant, such as support to remote rural economies, and also promote sustainable use (para 5.8);
- incentives should be more widely available for landscape, recreation and wildlife management, with enhanced grant for local authorities in remote areas (para 5.8);
- estate management should benefit from incentives, linked to management agreements that also create public benefits (para 5.8);
- a strengthened duty for obligations to conservation should be placed on public bodies and departments, with an obligation to audit for the discharge of this duty (para 5.12);
- new powers are required for development in inshore waters to be under planning control, strengthened powers for red deer management, a land management order to guard against poor stewardship, and public bodies should be able to require that environmental damage is restored (para 5.12); and
- new arrangements for co-ordination between land management interests are required, and a network of land management forums is proposed which will have the local authority at centre, with the new natural heritage agency or the Commission initially taking the lead in areas of high conservation value (para 5.13 to 5.19)

Glencoe.



Benefits

7.2 The objective of this review has been to secure long-term protection of our finest mountain landscapes and to provide for their sustainable use and enjoyment. We have a resource of mountain landscapes in Scotland that commands the admiration of visitors and commentators from overseas. This resource is valuable on a European scale, in that we have in Scotland some of the most accessible, but the most unsullied, remote land in the industrialised countries of Europe. Indeed, it is valued beyond Europe, particularly by the community of Scots overseas. It is a resource which we should treasure and which should be a matter of considerable national pride and commitment.

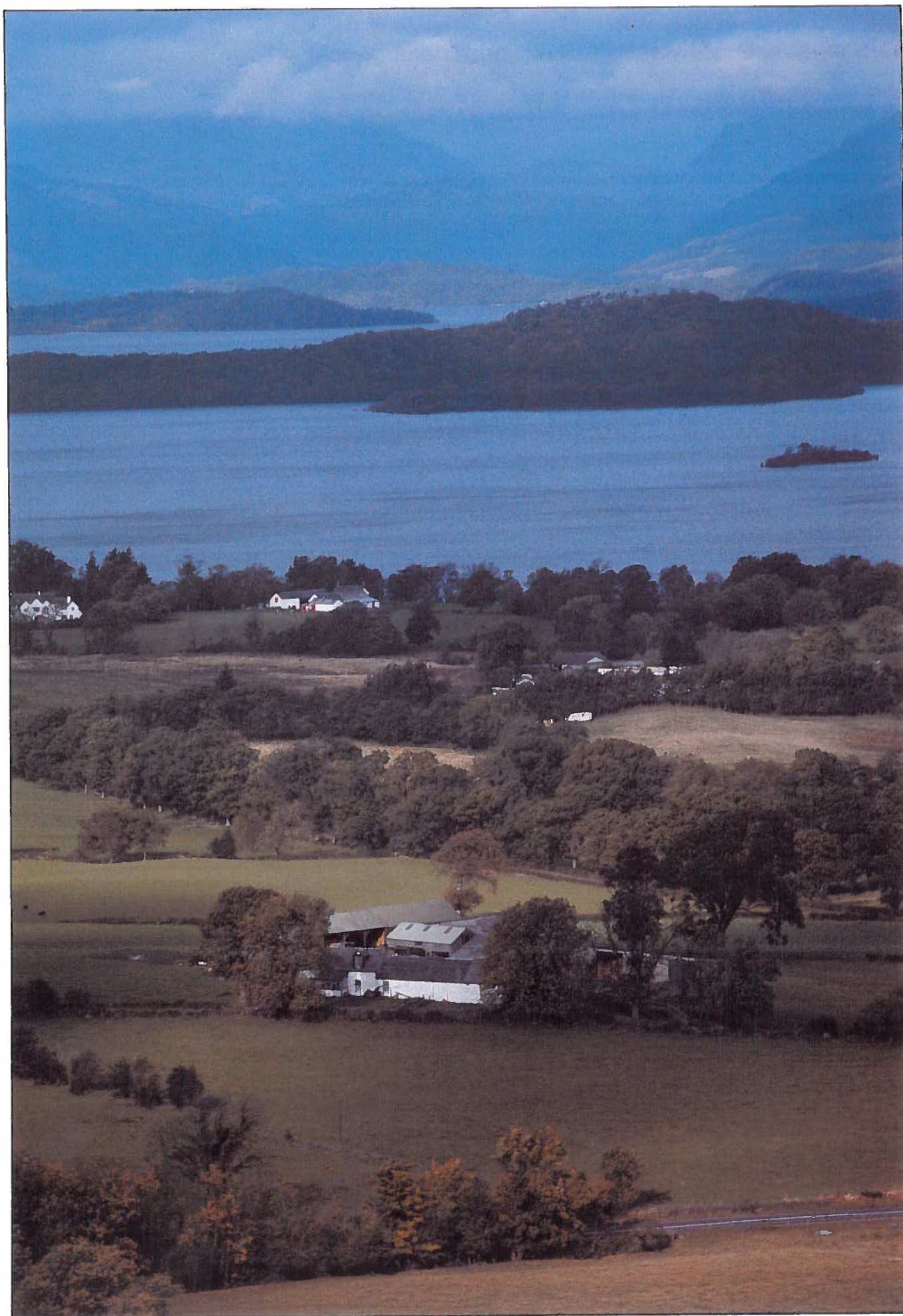
7.3 **The benefits of taking action to protect our mountains are wide-ranging and may be summarised as follows:**

- **The nation will acquire a new sense of pride and involvement in securing for posterity its finest natural heritage;**
- **Safeguarding action will help deter threats to this heritage and defuse increased confrontation on conservation issues;**
- **Recreation opportunities in the mountains will be protected;**
- **Conservation measures will safeguard local resources for more appropriate uses and underpin local community development in the long-term;**
- **Investment in conservation will create new jobs locally;**
- **In an increasingly more competitive market for travel and tourism, countries which can offer a distinctive and high-quality experience to visitors will benefit; and**
- **The image of Scotland abroad will be greatly enhanced and, in this way, investment in heritage conservation is a contribution to underpinning the Scottish economy;**

All these benefits are worth reaching for, but it is the pride, commitment and self-image of the Scottish nation which would be strengthened by these means.

7.4 Not to take action along the lines recommended above is to risk continued attrition to the quality of our mountain heritage, at a time when the purposes that these areas serve require reassessment, and when there is more dispute over the use of mountain areas.

7.5 The Commission believes that it is vital to act now, not just to halt the pattern of attrition described in earlier chapters, but in anticipation of trends and threats yet to emerge. Anticipatory action is now an accepted approach to guard against losses or damage that otherwise will be more expensive to remedy later. Our mountain heritage is a resource of outstanding quality and these intrinsic qualities justify positive safeguard and immediate action.



Annex 1: The World Conservation Strategy and Sustainable Development

The World Conservation Strategy was commissioned by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and prepared by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) with the aim of advancing the achievement of sustainable development by focusing the policies of governments and conservationists across the world. The World Conservation Strategy states that a new attitude to development is needed to account for those aspects of human wellbeing not forming part of conventional criteria of standard of living. This includes qualities of life, such as leisure time and opportunities, as well as common goods, such as fresh air, clean water, and access to countryside. It also states that human wellbeing is not advanced unless the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, and that to achieve this resources must be managed in a sustainable way. It recommends national strategies to meet its requirements and identifies three main policy recommendations:

(i) Cross-sectoral conservation policies, to ensure the roles and responsibilities of each level of government are clear, and that agencies responsible for living resources are as much concerned with maintenance as with production.

(ii) Anticipatory Environmental Policies. This has been taken forward in Britain by the Pearce Report, '*Sustainable Development*', published in 1989, which gave cost escalation of remedial action, irreversibility of damage to ecosystems, uncertainty about impacts on the function of ecosystems, and sustainable use as four reasons for an anticipatory approach to planning.

(iii) A broader system of national accounting. The Pearce Report explores evaluation of environmental assets as a prerequisite for the integration of environmental assessment with economic decisions. Three sectors of total economic value are identified:

- a) user values, deriving from the actual use of the environment;
- b) option values, deriving from the value of the environment as a potential benefit as opposed to actual present-use value; and
- c) intrinsic values, deriving from values which are in the real nature of the thing and unassociated with actual use, or even the option to use the thing.

Annex 2: IUCN Categories for Conservation Management and the Concept of Zoning

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, under the auspices of the United Nations, classifies protected areas through the Commission for National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA). It has identified 10 categories of areas necessary to manage the wildland resources of any nation, which can be divided into three groups:

A. Those categories for which CNPPA and the Conservation Monitoring Centre(CMC) take responsibility to monitor the status of each conservation area and for which CNPPA takes a responsibility to provide technical advice as requested.

Category 1 - Strict Nature Reserve

Outstanding ecosystems of scientific importance, with absence of direct human interference.

Category 2 - National Parks

Areas not materially altered by human exploitation with special scientific, recreational, educational and landscape interest, where the highest competent authority has taken steps to eliminate exploitation and occupation. Many of these areas are in national ownership.

Category 3 - Natural Monument/Landmark

Specific natural features of national significance.

Category 4 - Nature Conservation Reserve

Areas protected for populations of resident or migrant fauna of national/global significance, which are managed for their survival.

Category 5 - Protected Landscapes

Areas of aesthetic quality which result from the interaction of man and land, or natural areas managed intensively for recreation and tourism. Central or delegated planning control ensures perpetuation of land use practices. (It is this category under which many 'National Parks' in North West Europe are classified.)

B. Those categories which are of particular importance to IUCN as a whole and are generally found in most nations, but would not be considered exclusively within the scope of CNPPA. However, CNPPA and CMC may wish to monitor, and CNPPA to provide expertise, on those areas which are of particular importance to nature conservation.

Category 6 - Resource Reserve

Areas of unexploited resources which might be damaged by greater utilisation.

Category 7 - Anthropological Reserve

Areas managed for the maintenance of habitats necessary for the continuance of traditional societies.

Category 8 - Multiple Use Management Areas

Areas of national significance planned for management on sustained yield basis, with areas set aside for specific protection of natural features.

C. Those categories which form part of international programmes and which have specific relevance for nature conservation yet may, in many cases, already receive protection under a previous category. CNPPA and CMC may be called upon to monitor these categories and to provide special expertise in co-operation with other institutions with which IUCN has consultative status.

Category 9 - Biosphere Reserve

An area conserved by long-term legal protection as part of the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme, which aims to conserve representative natural areas throughout the world.

Category 10 - World Heritage Sites

Sites of outstanding universal value, as declared by the World Heritage Committee.

Boundaries and Zonation

The concept of zoning has long been used in town and country planning to delineate areas for particular land uses or in which particular policies apply. In many countries it is used in conservation management in protected areas, and its use is encouraged by UNESCO in the Man and Biosphere Programme. Approaches to zoning vary, as does the nomenclature associated with it, but nearly always there are three categories: a core zone, a buffer zone and a peripheral zone. Schematically these are concentric, but in reality may be a mosaic or cluster.

A core zone might apply to a precious landscape, habitat or wilderness area and would be an area where primacy would be given to strict resource conservation. The management regime would have the objective of safe guarding landscape, habitat and wildlife. There would be a presumption against land improvements and development, and there might need to be restrictions on access.

A buffer zone, for which analogues might be intermediate zone, managed conservation zone or countryside management zone, would be managed with a wider range of objectives than simply strict resource conservation. This zone can be used for regulated non-destructive activities which take account of the needs of core zone management. Landscape and habitat improvement, removal of eyesores, outdoor education and training, research and monitoring, some traditional land uses and outdoor recreation would be permitted in this zone. There would be a presumption against road construction, new building and other activities likely to damage landscape or wildlife interests.

A peripheral zone, for which analogues might be transitional zone, community zone, or environmental safeguard zone, would be the outer parts of the protected area where the traditional land uses and way of life would be maintained and where recreation and tourism needs compatible with the protected area would be met. The peripheral zone would be an area of transition into the wider countryside. Within the peripheral zone there might be small development zones for the provision of tourism and recreation facilities, and other industries related to sustainable use of resources, but only insofar as these would be compatible with the overall purposes of the protected area. To some extent there will be degrees of overlap between buffer and peripheral zones, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive of uses.

Such zonation would not apply to the wider countryside but only to protected areas on a selective basis at national or regional level with areas identified on the basis of environmental needs. It would be possible to relate such zoning to the IUCN categories outlined above and so integrate our protective system with international thinking. A core zone might be compatible with Categories 1 and 2, Strict Nature Reserves or National Parks, a buffer zone with Category 5, Protected Landscapes, and a peripheral zone with Category 8, Multiple Use Management Areas. In this way Scotland might find it easier to comply with international protocols such as the World Heritage Convention and the Man and the Biosphere Programme.

Indicative examples of such schematic zoning are afforded by the maps attached to the annexes on the four areas of Cairngorm, Loch Lomond, Ben Nevis/Glen Coe/Black Mount and Wester Ross.

Annex 3: Outline Powers and Administration of National Parks, Land Management Forums and Joint Committees

National Parks

National Parks would be a new designation in Scotland and would require legislation to set up National Park Authorities. National Parks would be established in areas of outstanding heritage value in need of comprehensive management because of pressure from development, recreation and tourism, and where there is a need to act in the national interest across local authority boundaries. The main duty of the authority would be to secure in a holistic manner the three objectives of conservation, recreation and social and economic wellbeing of the communities within its area, in a sustainable way. It would have an important educational and interpretive role and promotion, advice, and information services would be an important part of its work. It would seek to reconcile conflicting interests, bearing in mind that its primary responsibility would be the conservation of the resource, for which it would act as guardian of the public interest at the local, national and international level.

The essential function of each authority would be the production of a National Park plan which would guide and co-ordinate management and planning of land use within the Park. This would be aided by zoning the land area to indicate areas of different priorities for management ranging from wilderness protection to development (see Annex 2).

The Park plan would have statutory status in land use planning matters, through the preparation of a local area subject plan and through the vesting of development planning powers in the hands of the Park authority. The measures for land management prescribed in the Park plan would be enacted through the Park authority's powers to:

- co-ordinate grant-giving activities of agencies (DAFS, FC, CCS, HIE etc) through acting as an agent;
- introduce incentive schemes to initiate land management improvement in areas of special need (eg Integrated Development Programmes) using Park funds;
- enter into and fund management agreements to secure land management needs where necessary;
- control development;
- manage land and co-ordinate other land controlling organisations;
- impose land management orders, as a last resort;
- purchase land, compulsorily where necessary;
- control or inhibit use of all-terrain vehicles;
- introduce byelaws to control nuisances; and
- enter into management agreements to secure access.

A professional staff would report to a board which would comprise local and national representatives, appointed because of their knowledge of such matters as land management, planning, wildlife conservation, sport, recreation and tourism. The model employed in the English and Welsh parks is that of one-third national representatives, appointed by the Secretary of State and two thirds local authority representatives, appointed by the district and county councils covered by the Park area. This system is less well suited to Scotland, where the number of local authority members representing the population of the park may be very small and where many councillors would have been elected by populations far from the Park, in very different socio-economic and environmental conditions. It might therefore be appropriate to include Community Council or Rural Forum representatives on the board. All members would have voting rights.

Funding would generally be met from central government funds at 85% of overhead costs of staff salaries and running local offices and management services, and 85% of capital expenditure through a National Park Grant channelled through the proposed Scottish Natural Heritage Agency or the Commission.

A precept would be made on constituent local authorities for the balance. Income generated by the Park would be deducted annually in retrospect on a pro-rata basis.

Indicative annual costs have been prepared for running the four proposed Parks. These costs depend on a number of assumptions about the powers, structure and style of operation of the Parks and on various speculative projections about their activities. This exercise was not done to pre-empt decisions about how the Parks would be run or what they might do. Its purpose was to explore what scale of resources would be needed to achieve the kind of programmes set out in Annexes 4-7. The costs are estimated for a period of 5-7 years into their establishment, by which time an initial phase of growth will have been achieved, and therefore they do not represent long term needs for expenditure. In total, the projected net annual expenditure (allowing for some income) is £7.764 million, allocated:

Cairngorms	£2.609m	Ben Nevis/Glen Coe/Black Mount	£1.942m
Loch Lomond/Trossachs	£2.104m	Wester Ross	£1.109m

These costs include some existing costs for functions such as Town and Country Planning, which the Parks should undertake as part of integrated management in their areas, but the lack of information about public expenditure in the main land uses makes it difficult to predict the ratio of existing to new resources.

Further analysis of the way in which these costs might be shared between the local authorities affected, and with central government, makes it clear that a very significant burden falls on Highland Regional Council. Because of the large amount of land of heritage value in this region, and its relatively small population, a very high per capita cost falls on its residents. Arrangements for sharing the costs of National Parks need to allow for this factor.

The Park board would be supported by a technical group bringing in a wider range of interests including officials from local authorities, government agencies, local community groups, business associations and voluntary bodies. Some of these elements could be drawn from adjoining Land Management Forums (see below), Rural Forums and Local Enterprise Companies.

Land Management Forums

Land Management Forums would each cover an area of sufficient size to consider strategic planning of large-scale land management issues such as deer management, forestry, wild bird populations and water catchment. Boundaries would be determined on the basis of physical features relevant to land management, the sensitivity of these features, as well as considering the relationship of community centres to the practicalities of management. The areas would thus be of sub-regional size and not specifically related to local government administrative areas. They could be based on existing conservation designations or project areas.

Land Management Forums would be comprised of representatives of government bodies (FC, DAFS, NCC(S), CCS, STB, HIE/SE, CEC, SDD), local authorities and local land management interests (deer management groups, community forums, voluntary sector such as the NTS, RSPB, SWT etc). They could either meet on a voluntary basis or be legally constituted under minutes of agreement by the parties. They could be chaired by the local authority thus securing a linkage to local democracy, or by the proposed Scottish Natural Heritage Agency in certain sensitive areas thus securing oversight by the 'national interest'. They would require secretarial servicing from one or other of these sources, which might comprise arranging quarterly meetings, keeping minutes and arranging for follow-up action in the appropriate quarters. In most situations, because of the need for linkage to local democratic acceptance, forums chaired and serviced by the regional authority are likely to be appropriate.

No additional powers are envisaged for local management forums beyond those of their constituent members. Funding of the forums would also be achieved through their partners, including support for any project officer-led programmes or initiatives.

Land management forums could link with 'gateway' access to government funding and advice, and local linkages formed with Local Enterprise Companies and Trusts and Rural Forums.

The forums would have key tasks to:

- debate broad land use issues and assist in the preparation of indicative strategies for land use for their areas taking note of national guidelines;
- develop and encourage new approaches to land management to secure sustainable use of resources and encourage ecological restoration;
- monitor changing land uses and diversifications in land use acting promptly to open debate where conflicts appear likely;

- advise on individual owners' management plans; and
- offer advice on development proposals and statutory undertakings.

Necessary action to follow up the above duties would be enacted and funded by the appropriate agency in the partnership. In cases where there was a dispute between members of the forum, arbitration would have to be by recourse to the Secretary of State. An analogy for this exists in the procedures set out in SDD Circular 'Development Control in National Scenic Areas' where consultations over which there is disagreement between the planning authority and the Countryside Commission for Scotland are referred to the Secretary of State. A difficulty may arise because some matters of dispute may not be governed by statute, but since local authorities and national agencies would be parties to the forum no other referee than central government is appropriate.

Joint Committees

Joint committees already exist and might be a good vehicle where a more formal arrangement was felt to be needed, especially where the parent local authority wished to delegate certain functions to the local committee. A key requirement is to provide an effective and accountable partnership of people who can represent local and national interests. A Joint Committee of predominantly local members would be determined by Minute of Agreement formally endorsed by members of the partnership. The committee would draw two-thirds of its membership from the elected members of constituent local authorities, with the remaining one-third comprising nominees of sponsoring government agencies.

The Joint Committee would be supported by a Technical Group bringing in a wider range of interests, including officials from local authorities, government agencies, local community groups, business associations and voluntary bodies.

The Minute of Agreement for the Joint Committee could give it the ability to appoint staff to discharge delegated functions. The staff team should be led by a person with appropriate experience and qualifications. They would operate from an office in or near to the area for which they are responsible. One of the constituent local authorities would act as employing agent. We propose that core funding to cover overhead costs of staff salaries and running local offices be met at 85% by new central government allocations and the remainder by the constituent local authorities on a shared basis.

The Joint Committee would not have delegated planning powers but could monitor applications for planning permission within its area of responsibility and, where appropriate, submit observations to the planning authority. The tasks of joint committees would be similar to those of land management forums and might comprise:

- (i) devising strategies for land use planning and management, based on a recognition of the qualities that have given the area special heritage status, (ie all rural land use matters affecting heritage interests, including agriculture, forestry, game management, access and recreation);
- (ii) working towards the formal adoption of such strategies within the framework of a Subject Local Plan to be prepared by the constituent authorities in the area;
- (iii) drawing up and implementing action programmes for priority tasks and reviewing these at regular intervals;
- (iv) providing and managing a countryside ranger service in the area;
- (v) linking with the Scottish Agricultural College to offer a gateway service, by providing advice and administering grants on an agency basis in support of agreed objectives; and
- (vi) offering advice on all development proposals, statutory undertakings, land management issues and new forestry planting proposals which could affect heritage interests in the area.

Compared with joint committees, land management forums have the benefit of being a more informal partnership arrangement which need not be so weighted with local authority elected representatives. They could therefore have a greater land management component. The functions and range of tasks for each partnership could be specified in the Minute of Agreement.

Annex 4: THE CAIRNGORMS

Introduction

Proposals for protected status for the Cairngorms are long-standing. The area was identified as being of National Park quality in the Addison Committee report on National Parks in the early 1930s. The Cairngorms were identified again for such status in the Ramsay Reports of 1945 and 1947, and the report of the Scottish Wildlife Conservation Committee [a sub-committee of the Ramsay Committee] identified the high ground of the Cairngorms - above 2,500' - as deserving the status of National Park reserve, essentially an inner core to the proposed National Park where wildlife would have special protection. The Ramsay proposals for National Park status fell and part of the area was declared a National Nature Reserve in 1953. Prior to that date, the Scottish Office had given the area the designation of National Park Direction Area, as interim protection for possible National Park status in the future. The NPDA was superseded by the designation of National Scenic Area.

This long history of interest in giving the Cairngorms protected status signals the considerable value and affection ascribed to the area for its distinctive scenic character, for its strong sense of wildness, and for its wildlife, recognised as the most extensive and least modified high montane habitat in Britain. The Cairngorms have long been popular with the public as a place for outdoor recreation and the area has had eloquent advocates for its natural history.

The Importance of the Area

The Cairngorm Mountains form the centrepiece of the area being considered, but gain much of their remote, wild qualities from the wider expanse of the sparsely populated Grampian Hills to the south and east. Also important are the flanking glens with their remnants of Caledonian pinewood. The area considered here is drawn widely, with three regional and four district councils represented. The key characteristics of the area are:

- the outstanding landscape, which derives from the spaciousness of the high plateau, the drama of the deep-cut glens and rocky corries, and the contrasting colour and texture of pinewood, heather moor and high rocky ground;
- the wild land qualities, derived from distance from public roads, combined with elevation, roughness and naturalness;
- the montane vegetation and wildlife, valued by nature conservationists for rarities, both plants and nesting birds, for pure stream and loch waters, for the glacial geomorphology, and also for the pinewoods;
- the recreation value of the mountain environment, arising from the good snow-holding conditions of the area - the best in Britain - good rock for climbing and the wildness of the land, which offer challenge to participants in winter sports and good summer walking and climbing; and
- the year-round tourist importance of the Strathspey/Glen More area,

The area is now readily accessible from the Central Belt of Scotland and transport links to the south, but is too far from conurbations to be a major day-trip destination. Although most recreation occurs in the Glen More/Coire Cas area, there are significant entry points to high mountains at Braemar, Glen Doll, Glenshee and Glen Muick. There are ski resorts also at Glenshee and the Lecht and the settlements of Strathspey and Deeside attract less active visitors.

Problems and Issues

The split in the administration of the Cairngorm area between three regional councils and four district councils has led to differences in public policy. Grampian Regional Council has committed itself to preparing a management plan for the Eastern Cairngorms, working with NCC, CCS, voluntary organisations and landowners. Diverse landownership in the area involves public agencies, voluntary bodies and private landowners all playing a part. The main problems include:

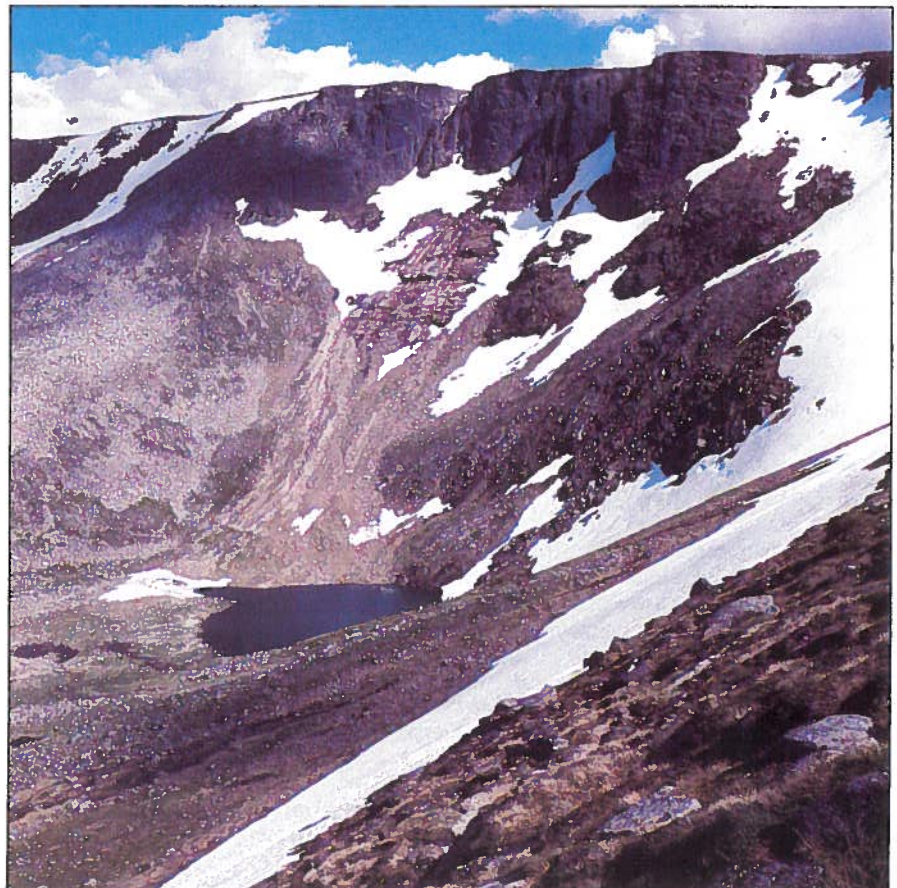
- lack of regeneration of native pine forests due to the high population of deer;
- the application of modern forestry techniques to native pinewoods, including underplanting with exotic species and non-local pine;
- attrition of the remote and wild mountain areas due to development of ski lifts, bulldozing of hill tracks, and unchecked footpath erosion;

- lack of a coherent strategy for visitor provision, due to unplanned and uncoordinated provision of facilities;
- polarisation of opinion concerning the development of ski-ing in the Northern Corries due to lack of an overall strategy;
- poor built development in some of the more rapidly changing settlements; and
- shortage of low-cost housing for local people, in the face of demand for second homes and holiday accommodation.

Main Issues and Opportunities

An integrated approach to the management of the whole area is needed and this should encourage the following action:

- the quality and wildness of the inner core of the area must be recognised and protected from further intrusion by built tracks and scars caused by all-terrain vehicles;
- consideration must be given to the appropriate level of grazing on the upland vegetation, with account taken of sward quality, regeneration of woodland, and deer welfare;
- the natural woodlands should be managed to allow regeneration to create areas of self-sustaining native pinewood extending to a natural tree-line;
- the quality of forestry in the area, especially at Glen More Forest Park and Glen Doll, should be improved;
- improved interpretation and information should promote appreciation of the natural environment and heritage value of the area, in particular its significance as an expanse of wild land;
- an access network should be developed to provide routes in keeping with capacity and integrated with other land-uses; and
- a major programme of footpath maintenance should be undertaken, following a comprehensive survey to identify routes of priority in accordance with the access network;



The Cairngorms.

- achievement of higher standards of planning and design of built development in keeping with vernacular architecture; and
- assistance to retain local communities through provision of local housing.

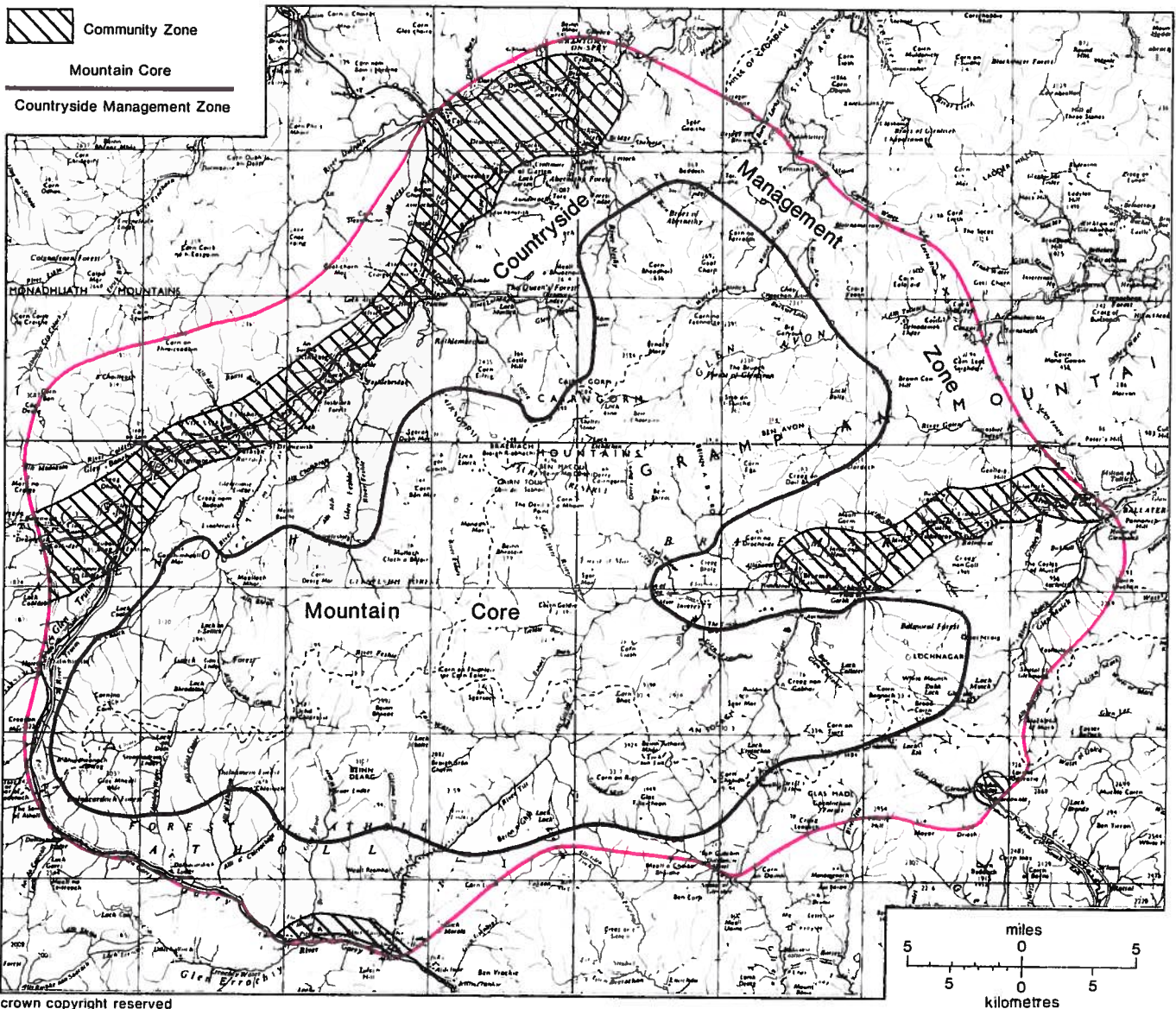
Boundaries and Zonation

A large area is outlined. This recognises the amount of wild land, and allows planning to protect these areas of natural value as well as to support communities on their periphery. Zoning will be important and to aid such a plan, the following indicative zones have been identified (see Map).

- Mountain core: an inner zone of high conservation value, where the prime objectives of management would be conservation, low-intensity recreation and game management;
- Countryside management zone: a peripheral zone where the land would be under more traditional land management and would include developed recreation uses. In this zone the aim would be to enhance the recreation and conservation value of the area and permit any minor development in support of existing activities;
- Community zone: including major settlements and trunk routes where a wider range of development in conformity with development plan needs will be permitted.

These are broad zones which indicate broad policy areas, but within individual zones there will be varied local application of policies.

THE CAIRNGORMS - INDICATIVE ZONING



Annex 5: LOCH LOMOND AND THE TROSSACHS

Introduction

Loch Lomond and the Trossachs have long been held in special affection. The area is important to the people of Glasgow and the central belt as a very accessible area of hill and loch country. This recreational importance and the valued scenery of the area was recognised by the Ramsay Committees as deserving national park designation, and it became one of the five National Park Direction Areas. Since that time the growth of recreational pressure both on the hills and on and around the lochs has continued. This stimulated the formation of the Loch Lomond Technical Group in 1972 to develop a co-ordinated approach to management and planning. The preparation of a Loch Lomond Local Subject Plan was agreed jointly by the constituent District and Regional Councils in Spring 1976, and the implementation of the agreed plan passed to the Loch Lomond Park Authority in 1988, with the creation of the Regional Park. This designation is not seen by the constituent authorities as sufficient to provide the status, powers or resources needed to manage the area.

The Importance of the Area

The area under consideration centres on the Loch Lomond Regional Park, flanked to west and east by the Argyll and Queen Elizabeth Forest Parks, three areas which combine to form a broad area of attractive and heavily visited upland. Its special characteristics may be summarised as follows:

- the combination of fine inland and sea lochs, set in countryside that spans the Highland edge with rugged mountain country to the north and open pastoral landscape to the south;
- Loch Lomond itself (and Ben Lomond) have a high place in the affections of the Scottish public - and also internationally - but the loch is also of high wildlife value, and increasingly used for recreation;
- the complex of lochs and small-scale rugged hill scenery of the Trossachs Hills with their literary association with Sir Walter Scott and others;
- the Argyll and Queen Elizabeth Forest Parks, providing recreational opportunities in a managed landscape; and
- its proximity to the major conurbations of west central Scotland.

The accessibility of the area from Scotland's major conurbations and its position astride main routes into the Highlands gives it significance as a day-trip and tourist destination and the volume of use reaches levels as high as any in Scotland. For the mountaineer, fine climbing country is found in the rocky 'Arrochar Alps', and the Munros around Crianlarich north of the area are well visited. Ben Lomond is a very popular climb, as are many of the smaller hills in the Trossachs, which provide excellent viewpoints. In addition, the West Highland Way long-distance route passes along the east side of Loch Lomond. The lochs of the area play an important part in recreational activity, with Loch Lomond and Loch Venachar accommodating a great variety of water sports.

The value of the area for nature conservation is high, on farmed and open hill land and also on the waters of the lochs. The numerous SSSIs include areas of upland plant communities, mixed woodlands, little modified island habitats, fens, bogs and mires. Loch Lomond is a nationally important site for its freshwater fish. The designation of the Regional Park as an Environmentally Sensitive Area recognises the importance of the relationship between wildlife, landscape and land management.

Problems and Issues

The two forest parks have the benefit of a stability in land-use and management towards identified aims which contrasts with the area in and around the Regional Park. Private ownership is dominated by estates to the north and smaller farms on the lower ground to the south, and there is public ownership for water supply. Major forces for land-use change may be identified as follows:

- steadily increasing visitor use, both day-trips and longer stays, contributing to pressure on the recreational facilities and demand for recreation-based development;
- rapidly increasing specialisation of recreational activity on the surface of Loch Lomond, leading to conflicts between users;

- the recent rise in the number of applications for major built developments in the countryside, including marinas, timeshare and chalet complexes, and the areas of high cost commuter housing. This problem is particularly acute along the south and west of Loch Lomond and in the Victorian settlements of the Trossachs;
- major footpath erosion problems on Ben Lomond, the Cobbler, Ben Venue and other popular summits, and major management requirements on the West Highland Way;
- provision for visitors has not kept up with growth in numbers; ranger services have developed separately in each district council and on the West Highland Way, and are unco-ordinated;
- development of a tourism-based economy has led to increased property values and shortage of low-cost housing for local people, with ensuing problems for community life; and
- decline of the farming economy endangers the traditional farmed landscape and the viability of local communities.

Main Issues and Opportunities

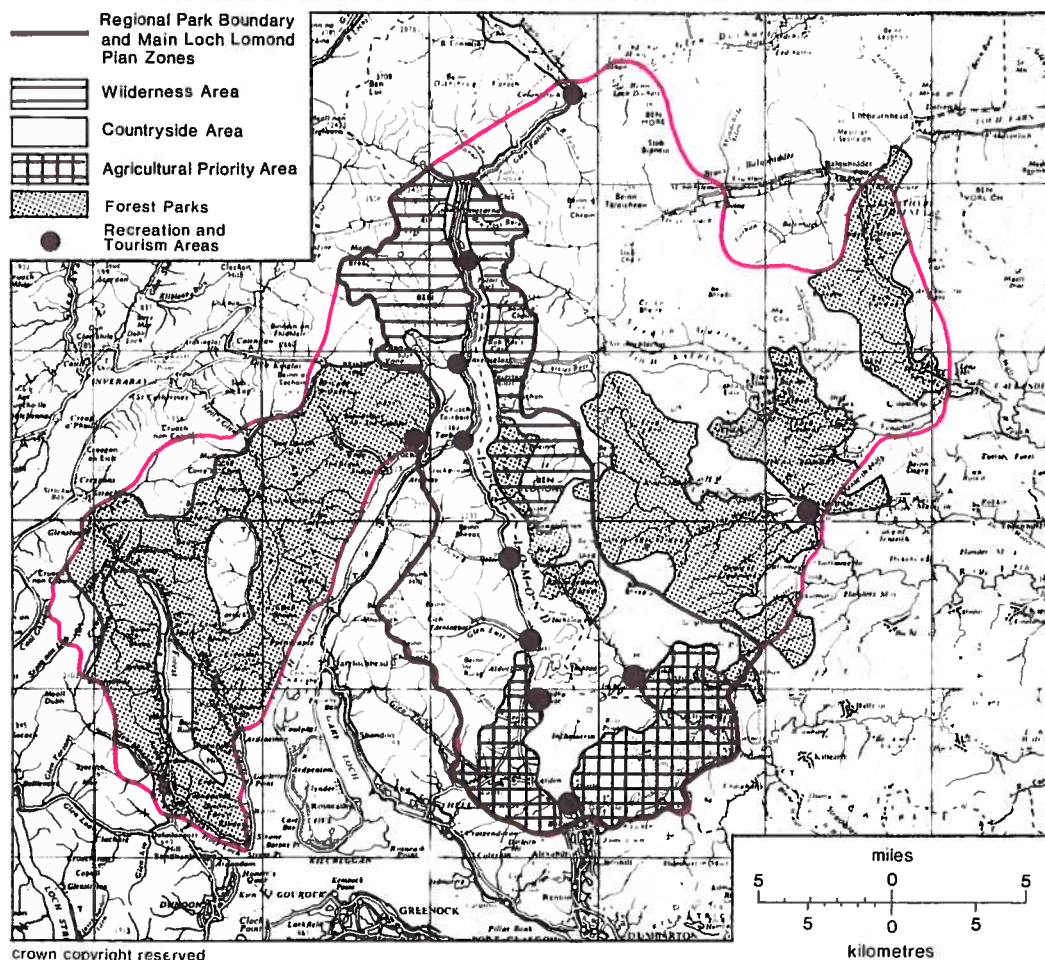
To achieve aims of balancing demands and pressures with the conservation of this landscape, the following issues are of importance.

- implementation of the Loch Lomond Subject Plan's proposals for a strategy for visitor provision and its extension beyond the boundaries of the Regional Park;
- co-ordination of conflicting user groups on the surface of Loch Lomond;
- development of an interpretive plan to promote appreciation of the heritage value of the area;
- development of an access network of paths for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, maintained to a standard consistent with expected use;
- support to community development as a part of economic development through infrastructure and housing provision, and links with farming, forestry and tourism support; and
- maintenance of the traditional farming landscape, and all the nature conservation value which is associated with this.



Loch Lomond.

LOCH LOMOND AND THE TROSSACHS - INDICATIVE ZONING



Boundaries and Zonation

The Loch Lomond Park Authority's Park Plan identified six policy areas to give a framework for development of policy and action as follows:

- Balloch Recreation and Tourism Development Area: an urban area crossed by main transport routes at the 'gateway' to the Regional Park, requiring major environmental improvement and suitable for development of central visitor facilities;
- Recreation and Tourism Areas: small areas, based on existing settlements requiring environmental improvement and small-scale visitor facilities;
- Countryside Areas: where access and associated visitor facilities are encouraged in keeping with landscape, nature conservation and agricultural interests;
- Remote Upland Areas: where provision of visitor facilities is minimal and policies relate largely to landscape and ecological conservation;
- Agricultural Priority Areas: where visitor access is not encouraged, and landscape and ecological objectives are carried out in line with agricultural objectives;
- The Loch: where use and access will be controlled to co-ordinate needs of users in keeping with ecological and landscape needs.

These zones would be an appropriate basis on which to expand zoned policies in a wider park area. The forest parks form a zoned policy area in their own right, in which the aim of forestry management is closely integrated with recreation provision.

Annex 6: BEN NEVIS/GLEN COE/BLACK MOUNT

Introduction

The Ben Nevis/Glen Coe/Black Mount area was - at over 600 sq miles - the largest of the five areas identified by the Ramsay Committees as worthy of National Park status. It was subsequently designated as a National Park Direction Area, and much of it was incorporated into the Ben Nevis and Glen Coe, and the Lynn of Lorn National Scenic Areas. Because it has good road and rail links with central Scotland, and with the A82 trunk road carrying much tourist traffic, the area has had a history of continued and locally heavy recreational use.

The Importance of the Area

The area under discussion is large and it overlaps the territories of three regional councils, with Highland Region covering the larger part in the centre and north of the area; Strathclyde occupying the land in the Black Mount to the south; and Tayside having a small portion in the east. Glen Spean and the Great Glen give clear boundaries to the north and north-west, but on the south and the east there are no wholly clear geographic limits, particularly on the eastern boundary where the area merges into the fine remote mountain country of the Ben Alder massif.

Put in a few words, the value of the area is that it contains some of the very best elements of Scottish mountain and moorland scenery. Of particular value are:

- the variety of characterful mountains, offering some of the roughest and most dramatic mountain scenery in Scotland in the Ben Nevis range, the Glen Coe hills and in Black Mount;
- Britain's highest mountain, Ben Nevis, flanked by three other fine 4,000 foot peaks all rising from close to sea level to give the greatest verticality of mountain terrain in Britain;
- Rannoch Moor, the extensive high-level moor bisected by the A82, the prime example of desolate moorland;
- areas of very considerable wildness and remoteness, notably to the east of the Ben Nevis range and on Black Mount Estate; and
- deep cut glens of great character penetrating into the mountain cores, in particular, Glen Coe, Glen Etive and upper Glen Nevis. Overall, it is the barrenness and roughness that dominate and impress.

The recreational importance of this area for the public lies mainly in the quality of the mountain resource. There are almost 50 Munros, including outstanding hills like Bidean nam Bian, Ben Starav, Stob Ghabhar and Binnein Mor and some of the finest ridge walks and traverses in the Highlands, such as the Mamore ridge and the Aonach Eagach. There are many fine long-distance rights of way and some of these are linked with the West Highland Way which traverses the whole area; the finest rock climbing outwith Skye is found in Glen Coe and Ben Nevis; the premier area for winter snow and ice climbing lies in the Ben Nevis/Glen Coe crags; and there are two developed ski areas, an older and low-key development at Meall a Bhuiridh and the second recently opened at Aonach Mor. The main foci for visitor concentrations are Glen Nevis and Glen Coe, but the two main private landholdings in the area - Black Mount Estate and the British Alcan property - have for long carried a heavy level of public use.

Nature conservation interest in the area is represented by ten SSSIs and one NNR, which protect valuable mountain vegetation, two important native pinewood remnants in the south of the area, the geological interest of the Ben Nevis and Glen Coe volcanic complexes, and extensive moorland and mire habitats. There is historical and cultural importance in the massacre at Glen Coe, the fort and *raison d'être* of Fort William itself, and the Gaelic heritage of Duncan Ban Macintyre, but most of this heritage is concentrated on the margins of the area.

Problems and Issues

The protection offered by the planning system, the ownership by NTS of a key property in Glen Coe, and the conservative and consistent management style of the large estates have all combined to protect much of the inner area from significant adverse change. However there have been strong forces for change in and around many of the settlements, particularly at Fort William, and a recent incursion into mountain land has been the new ski development at Aonach Mor. The main problems and threats to the area are as follows:



Ben Nevis.

- there has been pressure on the area from all sides by afforestation, so that the main mountain and moorland core is now surrounded and partly penetrated by plantations;
- the busy areas of Glen Coe and Glen Nevis are under pressure from proposals for small-scale tourist development, and visitor management in these two areas - particularly in Glen Nevis - has not had sufficient resources to secure effective, high quality provision;
- the summit of Ben Nevis needs attention; the mountain is under continued heavy visitation, including stunts and events attracted by the status of the place, and the tourist path is in poor condition. A major management effort is required here;
- pressure of many years' use of these hills and little management of the footpath resource has led to some of the path network being in very poor condition; and
- the opening up of the Aonach Mor ski development will lead to increased use of the inner parts of the Nevis range, by hillwalkers, off-piste skiers and outdoor activities groups.

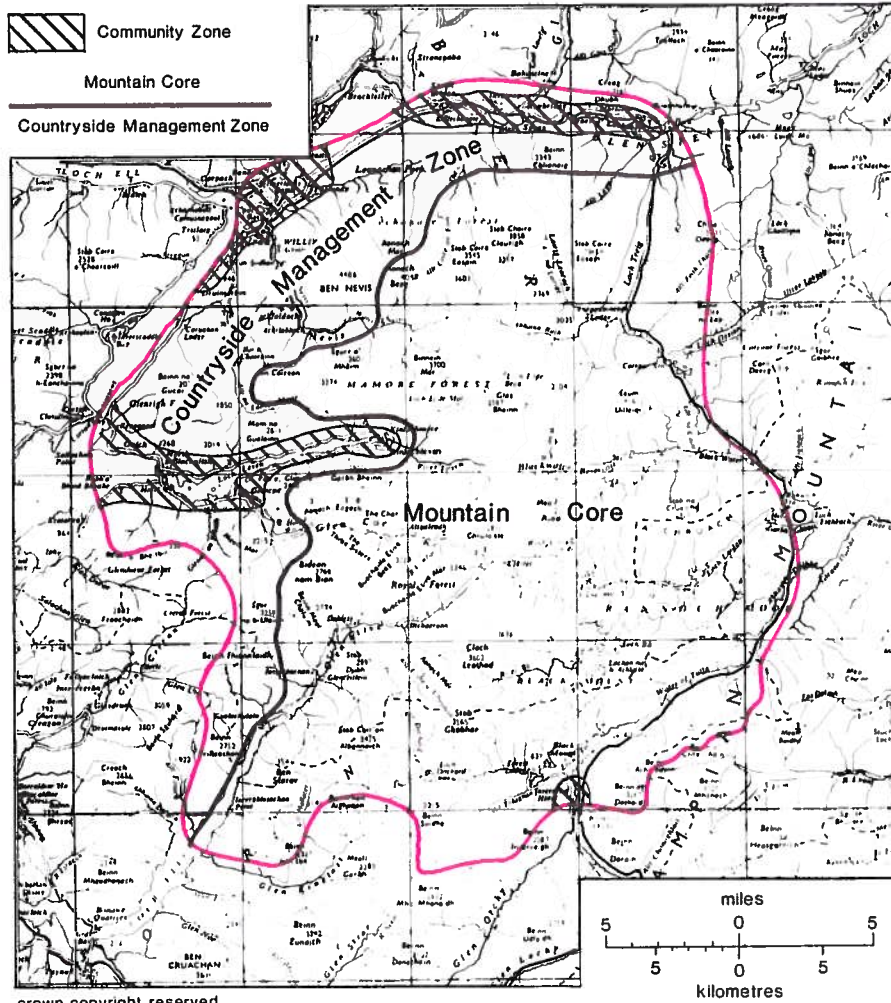
The quality of development in settlements has often not been of high standard, and there is much poor small-scale management along roadsides - signs, fences and roadside markers - which is trivial in each case, but which cumulatively impinge on the wildness and character of the terrain through which the motorist drives. There is a sharp contrast between the urbanised development of the Fort William area and its surrounding mountain scenery. This is characterised by Glen Nevis, which is entered through an industrial townscape, yet leads to some of the finest mountain scenery in Britain.

Key Issues and Opportunities

The key issues for management of this area are as follows:

- the inner cores of wild and open landscape should be protected from any further encroachment by forestry;
- the appearance of forest landscapes penetrating the mountain area should be enhanced, particularly in Glen Nevis, in the Loch Leven/Balachulish approaches to Glen Coe, in Glen Etive, and in the coastal glens in Duror;
- more positive policies are required for the enhancement and extension of native woodlands;
- positive management of the high mountain environment is now required, particularly in the Ben Nevis range;
- strategies for recreation management and investment to that end are required in the busy glens, in particular Glen Nevis, which urgently needs a new initiative;
- more management for recreation impacts - in particular the footpath network - is required elsewhere in the area; and
- planning policies should seek to improve the quality of design and management in settlements, and also protect the mountain core from intrusion by development.

BEN NEVIS/GLEN COE/BLACK MOUNT - INDICATIVE ZONING



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Boundaries and Zoning

The indicative boundary on the map shows an area smaller than the original Ramsay proposal, mainly in the exclusion of land on the south and the coastal zone, including the island of Lismore. These have been excluded as being either within the pressure zone of the Oban area (on the coast) or landscape in the southern part of the mountain zone that has had significant afforestation since the original war-time surveys. The eastern boundary is taken along the West Highland railway line as a convenience, but extension eastwards to the Ben Alder massif and indeed to Creag Meagaidh would be feasible and would adopt land of appropriate quality and character to that within the boundary. A threefold and indicative zonation can be envisaged of:

- Mountain core: here there would be a presumption against any major new development and firm controls on other changes of use. The primary land uses would be for conservation and recreation, in close harmony with other land uses, for which incentives and policies would exist to secure a cohesive approach to multi-purpose land management;
- Countryside management zone: in this area recreation would be regarded as a primary land-use, with management for a clientele that mainly stays close to the road network. Investment in the basic infrastructure of paths and simple and appropriate roadside facilities would be required;
- Community zone: this is the main zone of settlement, and more intensive land uses, concentrated on the north-west corner of the area in the fringing zone from Spean Bridge to Loch Leven. This is the main area of visitor accommodation and reception, where key aims might be to improve the built environment, to provide better all-purpose recreation and interpretive facilities, as well as securing the economic stability of local communities.

Annex 7: WESTER ROSS

Introduction

The area of Wester Ross was first recognised as deserving of National Park status by the Ramsay Committees. Designation as a National Scenic Area followed in 1981. However, there has been little history of co-ordinated land management and planning for the area as a whole although there have been initiatives within the area, such as the National Trust for Scotland's management of its Torridon property and an early planning strategy for the Torridon area. Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve has been awarded the Council of Europe Diploma and is a Man and the Biosphere Reserve.

The Importance of the Area

Wester Ross is the largest of the NSAs; it is mountainous in character, with most of its sparse population located in the coastal crofting townships. The outstanding features of the area are its wild and remote land, coupled with dramatic and varied scenery. These qualities derive from the geological make-up of the land and from the mix of loch and mountain. The main elements of value are:

- the fine coastline of sandy beaches, rocky headlands and scattered islands;
- the outstanding mountain masses of An Teallach in the north and the Torridonian hills to the south, both recognised as among the boldest and most distinctive of Scotland's mountains;
- the area, anciently known as Achaniasgair, comprising Strathnasheallag, Letterewe and Fisherfield Forests, unpenetrated by roads and comprising a succession of loch and high mountain, recognised as one of Scotland's finest remote mountain landscapes;
- Loch Maree, which gains its reputation as one of Scotland's most attractive large inland lochs through its loose scatter of wooded islands, its fringe of native oak and pinewood, and the setting it gives to the surrounding mountains; and
- the scatter of crofting townships along the less mountainous stretches of coast, fitting closely to the constantly varied topography and responding to shelter from the sea.

Although the area is not close to major conurbations, it has become popular as a tourist destination, with the traditional field sports of fishing and shooting now supplemented by car-borne tourists seeking the best of Scotland's less developed scenic areas.

The wildlife value is high, reflected in the designation of 17 SSSIs of which three are NNRs. These include some of the most important remnants of west coast Caledonian pinewood, other native woodland of coast, hill and lochside, and extensive areas of upland plant communities. However, nature conservation interest extends across the whole area of unintensively managed hill and coast land.

Many archaeological remains are known in Wester Ross, including prehistoric duns and brochs, the relics of an early Christian settlement at Applecross, and remains of pre-crofting townships away from the coast.

Problems and Issues

The area falls under one district and one regional council, and most of the mountainous interior is in sporting estate use. Land management has proceeded according to the varying priorities and aims of the private and public landowners with a lack of overall direction. Pressures on land management and planning which call for a more concerted approach include:

- increasing use of the hills by walkers and mountain bikers reflecting growing public interest in the remoter mountain environment and leading to locally severe footpath erosion;
- increasing economic reliance on a markedly seasonal tourist trade, concentrated in the larger centres;
- pressures for use of sheltered marine and inland waters for fish farming;
- the prospect of a revival of proposals for hydro-electric power generation;
- purchase of property by incomers, pushing up prices;



Beinn Alligin, Torridon, Wester Ross.

- opportunities to develop landscape and conservation offered by the clear-felling and re-stocking programme currently being carried out by the Forestry Commission at Slattadale, being constrained by lack of resources;
- a marked rise in deer population levels in recent years affecting deer quality and land ecology; and
- increasing volume of car-borne traffic in the peak summer weeks, when roadside congestion and pressure on short walks is intense. The overriding issues are the protection of the wild landscape of the area; the pressure on land management caused by more recreational use, and the changing structure of the local economy.

Main Issues and Opportunities

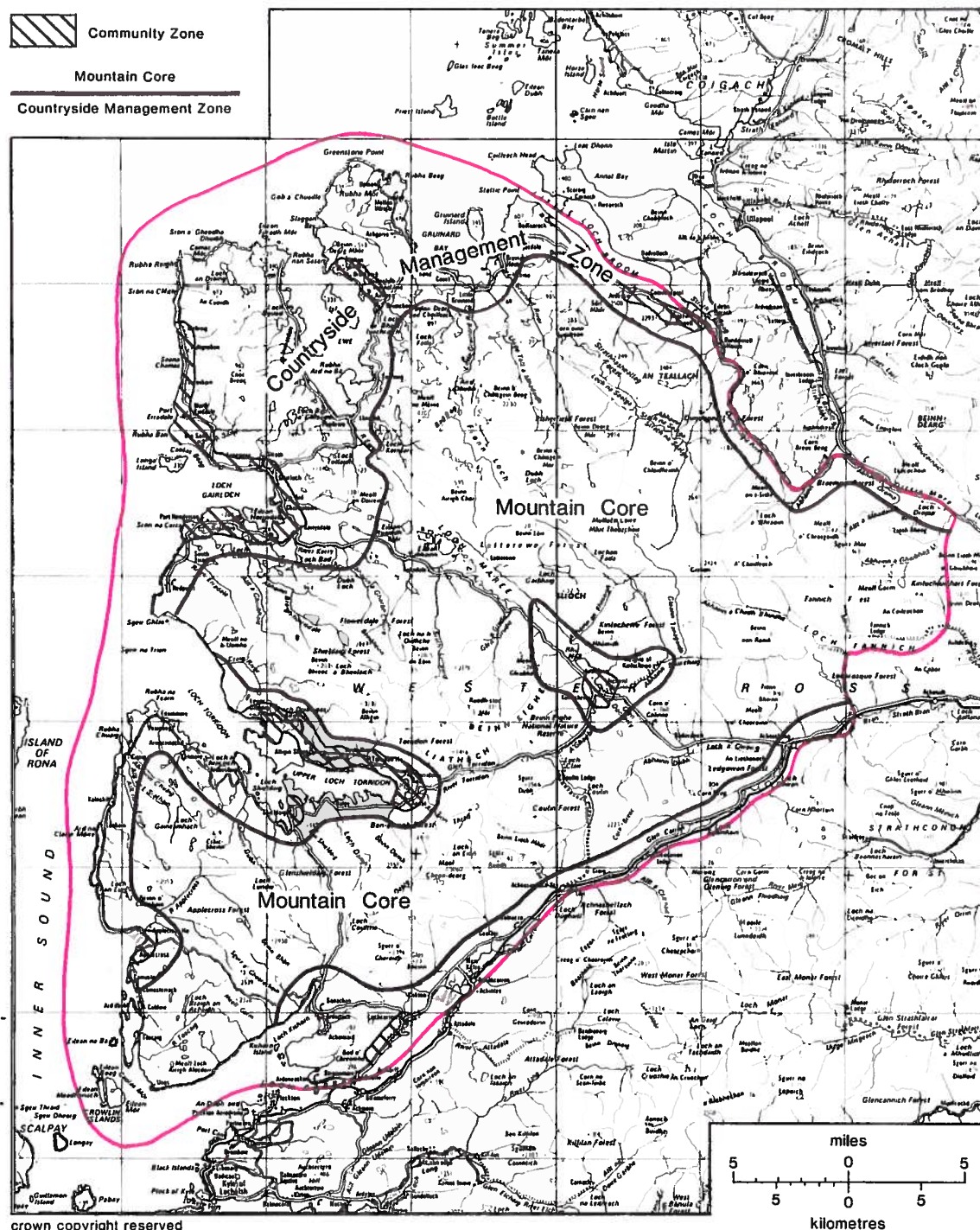
Wester Ross is an area of exceptional scenery and wild land and the needs of conservation, recreation and the economic use of land must be integrated. The main action needs may be summarised as follows:

- wild land qualities must be protected from penetration by vehicular access, or built development;
- footpath management needs should be assessed and funded;
- provision for short walks and demand for roadside car parking should be reviewed;
- forestry re-stocking should promote multi-purpose forestry in keeping with the character of the area;
- efforts to promote a more diverse economy should be continued, relying less on a brief tourist season concentrated in the main coastal towns, and promoting enterprise in keeping with conservation and recreation objectives;
- deer management should be co-ordinated and a plan developed for maintenance of appropriate stocking levels;
- the area's potential for regeneration and creation of natural woodland should be maximised both on and off publicly-owned land;
- an integrated interpretation network should be developed, concentrating on the historical and ecological value of the area;
- archaeological resources should be comprehensively surveyed, and their contribution to the interpretive plan assessed; and
- built development should comply with high standards of design and should be sympathetic to the natural environment.

Boundaries and Zonation

The boundary of the area is based upon a definition of the NSA, which identified the highest quality scenery. This has been extended eastwards to incorporate the Fannich Forest as a continuation of the wild land of the Fisherfield and Letterewe Forests, and southwards to incorporate the communities of Glen Carron. Those less scenic stretches of coast which were excluded from the NSA are also included to create a more coherent unit for planning and land management policy formulation.

WESTER ROSS - INDICATIVE ZONING



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The region identified covers a coastal economic area, through roads creating corridors of recreational and development importance, and core mountain areas of high conservation value. Within this framework, zoning will give varying priority to planning and management aims. Indicative zones are as follows:

- Mountain core: areas of remote and high ground, where grazing is the primary land management. Here, the objective will be to protect and enhance the remoteness and ecological value of the land, whilst allowing low-intensity recreation in keeping with appreciation of the natural environment;
- Countryside management zone: areas of crofting and farming landscape, primarily along the coast but also at Loch Maree, Glen Torridon and Strath Carron. This zone will cater for roadside and small-scale visitor provision, but will also incorporate the low ground of land management units;
- Community zone: areas of population concentration where visitor provision and enterprise development will be centred.

Annex 8: How the Review was Carried Out

At the outset of the review, the Commission appointed a panel of advisers, under the chairmanship of John Arnott, Vice-Chairman of the Commission. The panel held seven meetings, hearing presentations from Scottish and British organisations. A seminar, held jointly between the members of the panel and the Countryside Commission for Scotland, was organised in the Lake District to hear about the planning and management of the National Parks in England and Wales. The Commission is very grateful to all those on the advisory panel for the time and commitment they gave to preparation for and attending meetings. The panel is not responsible for this report, which has been prepared by the Commission subsequent to the conclusion of the panel's work.

To study the planning and management of national parks in other countries, Commission staff joined members and staff of Highland Regional Council on a visit to France and Germany. Thanks are due to the many officials of parks in Britain and Europe who gave their time and experience to make this informative and enjoyable. In addition to research carried out by staff, several studies were commissioned from consultants, including case studies of five mountain areas and a review of park systems abroad. These papers are listed in Annex 10.

An important part of the review was the consultation process which sought to involve many organisations and individuals. As well as issuing 86 invitations to respond to organisations representing land-use interests in the Scottish countryside, a leaflet inviting comments was widely distributed with the Commission's newspaper, in public libraries and through newspaper advertisements. 128 individuals and organisations responded to this publicity, and are listed in Annex 9. A seminar, opened by HRH Prince Charles, was held at Battleby in July, to which all formal consultees were invited, to give each a chance to debate matters of concern at workshop sessions.

A number of organisations and individuals sought meetings with staff to exchange views and to provide information. Public meetings were also held to give an opportunity for local people to state and discuss their points of view with the Chairman, Director and staff of the Commission. The meetings were organised by the Scottish Crofters' Union and by Rural Forum with its constituent organisations Highland Forum, Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey, and Deeside Rural Discussion Group. The Commission very much appreciates the efforts of all who contributed to the consultation process, which proved to be a particularly stimulating part of the review.

The following public meetings were held during the course of the review, and we thank the local groups who contributed much time and effort to the organisation of the events.

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Organised by</i>
Glenfinnan	Highland Forum
Lochinver	Scottish Crofters' Union
Poolewe	Scottish Crofters' Union
Lochcarron	Highland Forum
Ballater	Rural Forum and Deeside Rural Discussion Group
Aviemore	Rural Forum and Voluntary Action in Badenoch and Strathspey

The members of the Advisory Panel were:

John Arnott (Chairman)

James Boscawen

Dr J Morton Boyd CBE

Richard Cameron

Mark M Campbell*

Professor Robert M M Crawford

John L Goodfellow

Dr James Hunter

Eric Langmuir MBE

John F Loughray

Donald J Mackay

Robert Maund

Edwina Proudfoot

Robert Steedman

George Stewart CB

R Drennan Watson

**We record with deep regret the death of Mark Campbell in June 1990.*

We are grateful to the following for their contributions to the Panel's discussions:

John Toothill	Lake District National Park
Adrian Phillips	Countryside Commission
Antony Bryant	National Trust for Scotland
Bob Moodie	National Trust for Scotland
Michael Starrett	Pentland Hills Regional Park
Dr John Sheldon	Pentland Hills Regional Park
Peter Woodhead	Loch Lomond Regional Park
Cllr Duncan Mills	Loch Lomond Regional Park
Nick Pennington	Loch Lomond Regional Park
Andy McNab	Cobham Resource Consultants
Dr Robert Aitken	
John Foster CBE	
Dr J R Crabtree	

Annex 9: Consultees and Contributors to the Review

We are grateful to the following organisations who responded to a formal consultation document:

Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland

Atlantic Salmon Trust

British Association for Shooting & Conservation (Scottish Office)

British Deer Society (Scottish Council)

British Field Sports Society

British Mountaineering Council

Convention of Scottish Local Authorities

Council for National Parks

Council for Scottish Archaeology

Countryside Commission for England and Wales

Crofters' Commission

Department of Agriculture & Fisheries for Scotland

Forestry Commission

Game Conservancy Ltd

Highlands & Islands Development Board

Historic Buildings & Monuments Directorate

John Muir Trust

Landscape Institute (Scotland)

Loch Lomond Park Authority

Ministry of Defence

Mountaineering Council of Scotland

National Farmers' Union of Scotland

National Trust for Scotland

Nature Conservancy Council

Ramblers' Association (Scottish Council)

Red Deer Commission

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland

Royal fine Art Commission for Scotland

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (Scottish Branch)

Royal Scottish Geographical Society

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Royal Town Planning Institute (Scottish Branch)

Rural Forum

Saitire Society

Scottish Civic Trust

Scottish conservation Projects Trust

Scottish Countryside Activities Council

Scottish Countryside Rangers' Association

Scottish Crofters' Union

Scottish Development Agency

Scottish Landowners' Federation

Scottish Orienteering Association

Scottish Rights of Way Society Ltd

Scottish Scenic Trust

Scottish Society of Directors of Planning

Scottish Sports Council

Scottish Tourist Board

Scottish Youth Hostels Association

Scottish Wild Land Group

Scottish Wildlife Trust

Scottish Wildlife and Countryside Link

Timber Growers United Kingdom

World Wide fund for Nature

Regional Councils

Borders

Central

Dumfries and Galloway

Fife

Grampian

Highland

Lothian

Strathclyde

Tayside

Island Councils

Comhairie nan Eilean

District Councils

Angus

Badenoch and Strathspey

Dumbarton

Gordon

Kincardine and Deeside

Moray

Perth and Kinross

Ross and Cromarty

Stirling

Sutherland

We gratefully acknowledge the responses to our general invitation for comments made by the following organisations and individuals:

Association of National Park & Countryside Voluntary Wardens

Aviemore 2000

Aviemore & Spey Valley Tourist Board

Boat of Garten Community Council

Braemar Community Council

Cairngorm Chairlift Company

Cairngorm Recreational Trust Ltd

Callander Community Council

Conservation Association of Botanical Studies

Countryside Heritage ET Group, Mugdock Country Park

Cowal Archaeological Society

Cyclists' Touring Club

Dundee City Council

East Grampian Deer Management Group

Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society

Friends of Loch Lomond

Glasgow University Mountaineering Club

Habitat Scotland

Hertfordshire County Council

Institute of Leisure & Amenity Management

Inverness Mountaineering Club

Kirkcaldy Naturalists

Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club

Loch Lomond Association

Mid-Deeside Community Council

Mountain Bothies Association

North East Mountain Trust

Rothiemurchus Estate

Scottish Agricultural Colleges

Scottish Centre for Physical Education, Movement & Leisure Studies

Scottish Environmental Education Council

Scottish Federation for Coarse Angling

Scottish Federation of Tourism

Scottish Field Archaeological Society

Scottish Hang Gliding Federation

Scottish National Ski Council

Scottish Ski Club

Society of Antiquaries of Scotland

Stirling Field Archaeological Society

Strathard Community Council

Strathearn Archaeological Society

Tayside & Fife Archaeological Committee

The Almac Society

The Cairngorm Club

The Camping and Caravanning Club

The Grampian Club

Trees for Life Programme

Trossachs Community Council

Voluntary Action in Badenoch and Strathspey

West Ross Deer Management Group

Mrs A J Angus	Dr A S Mather
Mr G N Armitage	Mr J E Miculka
Mr W J Baird	Mrs J B S Montgomerie
Mr R C Barton	Mr T Mooney
Mr D Bennet	Mr G W Morison
Mr E Bennett	Mr M F Murchison
Mr N Bullivant	Mr J M Macdonald
Ms K Butler	Mr A J Macdonald-Buchanan
Mr E M Campbell	Mr M MacEwen
Professor J T Coppock	Ms C MacInnes
Dr & Mrs R W Crawford	Mr D Mackenzie
Mr A Davidson	Mr A Macpherson
Mr H Dott	Mr E A Macpherson
Mr D P Edgar	Mr F McCubbin
Mr I A Ellis	Mr W W McIntyre
Mr P Fentener van Vlissingen	Dr M C McLeod
Dr J Fenton	Mr R McOwan
Mr J A Forster	Ms P Newton
Mrs H Fraser	Mr B K Parnell
Dr P Frew	Canon & Mrs M C Paternoster
Mr A J F Fuller	Mr M Pattinson
Mrs M Gibson	Mr D Poore
Dr I A Glen	Mr I H Provan
Mr D Glen-Riddell	Dr M J Riddell
H & R Golby	Mr G Sangster
Major W G Gordon	Mr L S B Scott
Mr R N Graham Campbell	Mr R Sidaway
Mr K J Griffin	Professor M Slesser
Mr P H Hainsworth	Mr J M Souness
Mr D Harrison	Mr F Spencer-Nairn
Mr F Howie	Ms J F Stevenson
Sir Edward Hunter-Blair	Mrs D Talks
Mr R Izatt	Mrs H F Torbet
Mr D Jamieson	Mr W Waugh
Mr K I Lang	Mr P E Williams
Ms R Lauder	Miss D V Wilson
Mr J L Lawrie	
Mr R Leask	
Ms K Lee	

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Papers produced for consideration by the Advisory Panel:

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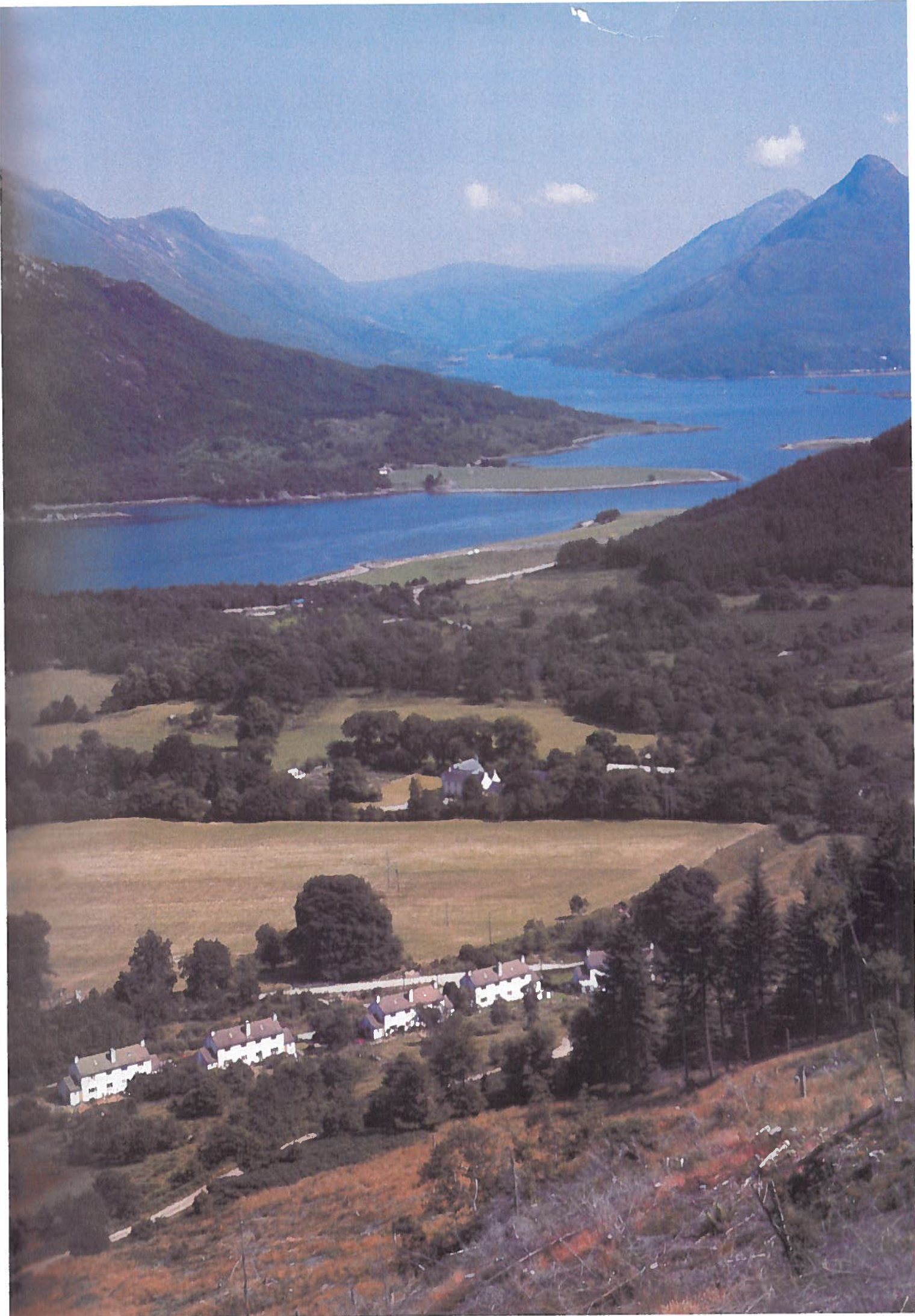
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